In The Matter Of:

DM&E POWDER RIVER BASIN EXPANSION PROJECT PUBLIC MEETING

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT November 1, 2000

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DM&E POWDER RIVER BASIN EXPANSION PROJECT DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT PUBLIC MEETING

PROCEEDINGS TRANSCRIBED FROM VIDEOTAPE Newcastle, Wyoming November 1, 2000

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[1] PROCEEDINGS

[2] (1:00 p.m.)

[3] STEVE: to get involved, [4] require DM&E to coordinate with these [5] agencies and come up with ways to address [6] their concerns and mitigate the potential [7] impacts.

[8] One thing that is important to note [9] is that DEIS does indicate that there are a [10] number of impacts that it feels would be [11] difficult to mitigate effectively. As part [12] of the commenting process on the draft we [13] would like your input and your comments on [14] mitigation measures imposed or other measures [15] that you feel based on your knowledge of the [16] area could be beneficial or helpful in [17] reducing the impacts of the project if those [18] exist.

[19] Last then, mitigation measures [20] included discussion on communities and [21] agencies getting together and negotiating [22] agreements with the DM&E as it has been done

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[1] in past cases before the STB again to assist [2] in coming to some consensus on mitigation [3] measures that would be beneficial to all [4] parties and agreeable to all parties of [5] the project. DEIS also will improvise a [6] mechanism whereby submitted to the STB [7] so they can be considered for potential [8] imposition on the project should it be [9] approved. [10] So with that I'll turn it back over [11] to Bonnie to finish up our opening remarks [12] and get all of your comments. Thank you.

[13] BONNIE: Let me talk a little bit [14] more about the comments. The agencies do [15] welcome your comments in two ways, oral [16] comments at this meeting as we mentioned. We [17] are videotaping and taking notes. They will [18] be transcribed and submitted to the formal [19] record. Then written comments, not to sound [20] but formally submitted in writing and [21] sent by mail.

[22] The agencies will be responding to

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[1] the comments in the final environmental [2] impact analysis which is also called the EIS. [3] Obviously you have the right to give us [4] comments on anything that you'd like. I can [5] tell you that the ones that will be most [6] productive and constructive for the process [7] will specifically be comments

on the topic [8] Steve mentioned, the environmental issue [9] areas, the Draft Environmental Impact [10] Statement, the document that was prepared. [11] Any comments you may have on the adequacy of [12] that document, on the information that's [13] contained within that document. On the [14] programmatic agreement and the biological [15] assessment. On Section 404 permit [16] applications — those are the ones with Jerry [17] from the Army Corps of Engineers discussed in [18] regards to South Dakota and Wyoming and [19] Minnesota, 404 permit applications. Finally, [20] we'd like to receive your comments on the [21] proposed forest land amendments.

[22] So today we're taking comments

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[1] first from federal and state elected [2] officials. We do not have — we actually [3] have as Dumont (phonetic) mentioned that [4] today — we'd like to welcome His Honor. We [5] have aides from U.S. Senator Michael Enzi's [6] office. That's Robert Bailey. And an aide [7] from U.S. Representative Barbara Cubin's [8] office. That's Jack King. Then we also have [9] Mike Mills, the mayor here of Newcastle, and [10] Mike will be one of the speakers a little bit [11] on in the agenda. We'd like to any [12] other elected officials that are here that we [13] haven't acknowledged.

[14] I would like to again reiterate the [15] ground rules. What I will be doing is ask [16] you that in order for us to accommodate all [17] the speakers today we'd like to ask that you [18] keep your oral comments to about 3 to 5 [19] minutes. It needs to really be 5 minutes [20] maximum for the list of folks that we have [21] that signed up to speak in order for us to [22] get through the whole list and be sensitive

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[1] to the ones that are at the end. Please keep [2] the comments to 5 minutes.

[3] If you have anything beyond that, [4] again your written comments will be treated [5] exactly the same as your oral comments. [6] There is no difference. Hopefully in [7] addition to submitting oral comments, you [8] might have copies of those or brought copies [9] of those with you. If you did, we can give [10] them to the panel. That's great. You can [11] submit them in writing as well. That will be [12] great.

[13] So with that I think we'll get [14] started. I'm going to let you know I'll [15] set it exactly for the 5 minutes. I will let [16] you know when you have 1 minute left so that [17] you can summarize up if your comments are [18] lengthier. Again, if you can keep your [19] comments 3 to 5 minutes, that would be great.

[20] Our first speaker is Darnell [21] Donnelly.

[22] MR. DARNELL: My name is Donnelly

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[1] Darnell, Today I will address my comments to [2] the adequacy of your DEIS. My first comment [3] concerns Chapter 1, page 118, 1.3 — which [4] states that was 131 million tons, but [5] only 80 million were shipped because of [6] transportation problems. This statement is [7] directly attributed 41 Volume XLIX, [8] number 5, pages 41 through 46. Nowhere in [9] his reference does he mention these mines by [10] name. Nowhere in this reference does he [11] mention the production of these mines. And [12] nowhere in this reference does he blame the [13] shortfall on transportation problems. It's [14] not there. Right here is the reference if [15] you'd like to look at it.

[16] The next paragraph states that for [17] the past five years coal carriers in the [18] basin have failed to meet guaranteed cycle [19] times. My first question — which five [20] years? Are you talking about '92 through '96 [21] as in this information, or are you [22] talking about some other five years?

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- [1] My second question what's your [2] source for this information? Who said the [3] carriers in the basin failed to meet [4] guaranteed cycle times?
- [5] My third question is why didn't you [6] make explicit reference by footnote to this [7] conclusion?

[8] These are examples of what all [9] through this EIS. But NEPA, 49 [10] U.S.C. 1502(25) deals with footnoting [11] also, footnote 42, the same thing. You cite [12] the pending legal action as proof of service [13] problems to this basin. Number one, I'd like [14] to ask you, has this pending legal action [15] been resolved? Number two, what is the [16] outcome of this legal action? Number three, [17] how does the pending legal action show proof [18] of anything?

[19] In Volume III-B at 4.4-44 you show [20] tax tables that offer an estimate of county [21] property taxes at you do so with no [22] footnote. You do offer later in the EIS an

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[1] explanation of your methodology. At least [2] it's your idea of an explanation, I guess. [3] It doesn't explain much to me. But NEPA [4] specifies that you will make explicit [5] reference by footnote from scientific and [6] other sources for conclusions in the [7] statement. NEPA also says that no material [8] may be incorporated by reference unless it is [9] reasonably available for inspection by

[10] potentially interested persons within the [11] time allowed for comment. This is [12] at 1502.21.

[13] Where do you expect us to reference [14] this? Why do you not make it available [15] to interested parties as NEPA specifies that [16] you should? At 4.4-31, Volume III-B, you say [17] that groundwater wells used during [18] construction to prevent reductions in [19] yield will be expected to come back during [20] operation. How? When? Why? What's your [21] source? Again, see 1502.24.

[22] In the unlikely event of derailment

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[1] you say, however, if a visitor did not [2] previously visit an area, he would not know [3] if his view was impaired. All of these are [4] just unsupported conclusions, and they're not [5] appropriate for inclusion in the EIS.

[6] I can find no estimate of habitat [7] loss of prairie dogs in your Draft EIS. My [8] mitigation policy recommends that no [9] habitat for candidate species. Prairie dogs [10] are awarded but precluded. This makes them a [11] candidate species. The preferred alternative [12] numerous colonies, both in Wyoming and [13] South Dakota. Loss of habitat sterilize [14] the you have roads, you have fire [15] breaks, and you will have mortality on [16] prairie dogs due to construction [17] calculated and give them consideration, [18] particularly as they apply to other candidate [19] species and threatened and endangered species [20] including swift foxes, mountain, [21] black-footed ferrets. You invited comment

[22] on -

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- [1] BONNIE: One minute.
- [2] MR. DARNELL: One minute?
- [3] **BONNIE**: One minute.

[4] MR. DARNELL: You invited comment [5] on WG alternative. I'll comment on [6] that. Number one, you've underestimated the [7] wetlands by a huge factor. Number two, [8] you're still scoping during the EIS. Number [9] three, 1502.14(e) requires that you identify [10] your preferred alternative in the draft.

[11] One other thing I'd really like to [12] comment in my one minute, 1502.10 specifies [13] the format to be used in a draft EIS. It [14] states that the standard format should be [15] used unless there are compelling reasons to [16] do otherwise. Index is listed as item J. [17] What are your compelling reasons for not [18] having an index in a 5,000-page document? [19] Thank you.

[20] **BONNIE:** Thank you. Again, if [21] there is time for a meeting at the end of

the [22] meeting and we need to come back to some of

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[1] the speakers, that's fine too. But, again, [2] please submit your comments in writing as [3] well. It will be treated exactly the same as [4] the oral.

[5] One other thing, I didn't notice, [6] and the questions clearly were in comment [7] form, but again if folks have questions, if [8] you can just fill out that orange card, [9] procedural questions, and we will take them [10] and take a look at them at the break and see [11] if there are any that we can answer [12] specifically about the process.

[13] With that, let me ask Nancy Darnell [14] to speak next.

[15] MS. DARNELL: Good afternoon. I am [16] Nancy Darnell County, Wyoming. To the [17] hearing board I'd like to thank you for [18] holding these hearings so that citizens have [19] an opportunity to comment on the Draft [20] Environmental Impact Statement. I've had my [21] copy of this 13-volume statement for three [22] weeks so my comments aren't preliminary and I

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[1] reserve the right to add comments throughout [2] the comment period.

[3] This is one of the busiest times of [4] the year for agricultural people with [5] hunting seasons, and shipping livestock. [6] Frequent storms during the three months may [7] also impact people's ability to respond. In [8] addition, the two most important family and [9] cultural holidays, Thanksgiving and [10] Christmas, are included in the comment [11] period. Therefore, I formally request [12] an 180-day extension of the comment period.

[13] The draft is fatally flawed in a [14] number of ways. The air quality information [15] is incomplete. No one can comment on [16] material that's not available. The appendix [17] state that the EIS was used for a basis [18] with updating. Well, it was updated. [19] Existing emissions on page 510 — it says [20] that existing emissions were used for [21] methane facilities. What or number of [22] CEM facilities was used?

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[1] Appendix E, page 31, states [2] similarly, emissions and other information on [3] potential new CEM developments are not yet [4] available. In this case we could guess on [5] the types of development since we know [6] approximately where they will be located. [7] Guessing should not be a part of the DEIS, [8] and guessing in this case is not necessary as [9] the Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation [10] Commission is issuing

permits on an average [11] of 800 new wells per month. This is a public [12] record available to all.

[13] Appendix E, page 3, goes on to [14] state that the location of potential Wyoming [15] CEM development would be on the west side of [16] the Powder River Basin far away from [17] areas where we expect to see the highest [18] impacts due to the DM&E railway expansion. [19] Where is the documentation for this [20] assertion? Our inquiries to CEM companies [21] and the PRB indicate that development is [22] occurring all over the basin, but new

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[1] facilities are being proposed for the [2] southeast corner of the PRB, closest to the [3] class 1 [4] The DEIS says that alternatives B [5] and C have less impact on the air quality [6] than alternative D, but it appears that [7] analysis of both of those have failed to [8] include the emissions of trains traveling the [9] current rail line from Nebraska. There [10] are no plans in the application or in the [11] DEIS to abandon the present railroad so [12] emissions from those trains must be [13] considered in the modeling. In addition, [14] more trains than the current number should be [15] used in the modeling because DM&E says that [16] the major reason for this project is to [17] better serve existing customers. Therefore, [18] it's reasonably foreseeable that traffic on [19] this portion will increase. If the DM&E [20] really intends to better serve those [21] businesses, then those portions of the [22] present system will also have to be upgraded

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[1] resulting in more impacts to the wetlands and [2] streams of the area because the present line [3] crosses the same tributaries as the [4] Cheyenne — alternatives B and C.

[5] Another deficiency in the DEIS is a [6] lack of discussion with respect to coal dust. [7] In Volume III-B the DEIS says FDA identifies [8] no detailed studies that provide information [9] on the amount of coal dust lost from rail [10] transportation. A quick review of materials [11] on the Internet turned up a couple of sites, [12] and one I have included in the appendix to my [13] comments today. So it wouldn't have taken [14] long to find places that there are comments [15] available.

[16] In addition, I have a bag of coal [17] particles collected from the Burlington [18] Northern Santa Fe rail line Texas, [19] a mere 750 miles from the Basin. There is [20] definitely a change in the environment and [21] coal particles are being strewn out of rail [22] cars for thousands of miles on the way from

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[1] mine to utility. A picture of the crossing [2] marker and the coal dust is also in the [3] appendix of my comments for you.

[4] Another deficiency in the draft is [5] the lack of study the Mississippi River [6] impacts. In the March 5, 1999 decision [7] setting forth the final scope of the draft, [8] the FTE stated that the impact to the [9] Mississippi River does not meet the [10] reasonably foreseeable standard because there [11] is a "high level of uncertainty about the [12] amount of the coal that DM&E would transload [13] to barge."

[14] BONNIE: One minute left.

[15] MS. DARNELL: Last night at [16] meeting one of the applicants — or the other [17] night meeting one of the applicant's [18] proponents stated that one of the advantages [19] of this project was being able to barge coal [20] up and down the Mississippi, thus reaching a [21] number of utilities. It would appear that [22] the Edison Electric sees barging as an

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[1] immediate outcome of this project. A new [2] draft must include a study of the impacts to [3] the Mississippi.

[4] There are a number of errors of [5] fact in the DEIS that in my written comments [6] I have detailed. I think one of the major [7] errors that's in the DEIS is the estimation [8] of the mine track. Another thing there's [9] been much discussion about is the miles of [10] track leading rain falling to the West [11] Coast. There's been a lot of talk in the [12] press about how much shorter this route would [13] be. In my comments I have a chart of those [14] times.

[15] So I'm asking you to vacate this [16] Draft EIS and come out with something that is [17] factual.

[18] BONNIE: Thank you.

[19] MS. DARNELL: I have with me my [20] comments.

[21] **BONNIE:** Great. You'll be [22] MS. DARNELL:

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[1] BONNIE: Thank you.

[2] MS. DARNELL:

[3] BONNIE: Lea Stodart?

[4] MS. STODART: My name is Lea [5] Stodart and I am opposed to the DM&E [6] expansion project. I would first like to [7] request an additional 180 days minimum for [8] the comment period on the DEIS. There is no [9] way to get through this in the time we have [10] allotted. Not to mention the 404 permit [11] application that is even more difficult to [12] comment on since the deadline on that

32 [13] pounds of information is November 29th, much [14] earlier than the deadline on this 32 pounds [15] of the DEIS. I also request that the 404 [16] should be extended and also be more readily [17] available to the public. The nearest [18] complete copy is 100 miles from me. I can't [19] go read it in an hour. Everyone on the [20] interested parties' list should have received [21] the 404 permit application.

[22] After to starting to read the

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[1] information in the DEIS I wonder if there was [2] any common sense used in preparing it. There [3] is no rhyme nor reason when reading it. The [4] table of contents is incomplete. There is no [5] index. The glossary is lacking in many words [6] needing definition. And try to find a name [7] in the interested parties. You didn't even [8] alphabetize them.

[9] The drafts are illegible and [10] difficult to find afterwards when we try to [11] refer back to them. And I would like to see [12] you try to find a specific place on the maps. [13] They are ludicrous as the first maps brought [14] to us by DM&E at the first meeting. They [15] haven't even labeled the highlands correctly. [16] The Corps maps are much more readable. Yet [17] they are only for alternative C and are not [18] easily available.

[19] To comment more specifically, in [20] Volume VI, page A61, footnote 41 which was [21] something I states DM&E supports its [22] assumptions by stating that it expects the

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[1] growth rates for electricity generated by [2] coal-fired plants in the core market areas to [3] be percent per year requiring capacity [4] utilization factors to exceed 75 percent by [5] the year 2010. DM&E cannot be a substantial [6] source, an authority, especially in regards [7] to assumptions and assertions. Particularly [8] where in Volume I, Chapter 1, table 1-5, it [9] says the growth rate will only be 1.1 [10] percent? Which percentage do you expect to [11] stand behind?

[12] In Volume III-A, table 4.1-7, [13] county wetlands acreage for South Dakota, the [14] total wetlands acreage is at 179.4 [15] acres. After making several phone calls, all [16] long distance by the way, I found in Volume [17] I, the general project, part 6, page 2, [18] table 1, summary of the wetlands impacts in [19] the 404 permit application by the United [20] States Army Corps of Engineers it states [21] affected wetlands in eastern South Dakota are [22] going to be 319 acres, western South

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[1] Dakota 211 acres, a total of 530 acres, a [2] difference is 350.6 acres in the two

DEISs. [3] I would say that is a major discrepancy.

[4] In Volume I, page 118 I happen [5] to have it. I know it is the correct [6] reference because it's also used for another [7] footnote in the DEIS, and that footnote [8] matches the what it's talking about. I [9] can't say that the DEIS can be that good if [10] it's misleading. In fact, you could almost [11] call it fraudulent I'm not sure if the [12] Surface Transportation Board thinks that we [13] are too stupid to see how inaccurate this [14] DEIS is, but I think you as a branch of the [15] federal government should be ashamed [16] have you forgotten that you also work for us [17] too, not just for DM&E Railroad? The [18] financial inadequacies of the DM&E Railroad [19] should not be very relevant. [20] In the DEIS page 1, Volume I, it [21] states in there that they expect another \$110 [22] million will make them viable after they've

age 23

[1] already put \$10 million in. Why do we need [2] to know that? That's not an environmental [3] impact statement.

[4] I think the DEIS should be thrown [5] out and completely redone, and I also reserve [6] the right to submit further comments as I [7] read further into this debacle.

[8] **BONNIE:** Thank you. I think your [9] son Cole Stodart (?) is next.

[10] MR. STODART: My name is Cole, and [11] I am opposed to the DM&E expansion project. [12] I live on a ranch and I am within the fifth [13] generation to be raised there and make this [14] my way of life. I have trouble understanding [15] the DEIS since there are so many places that [16] are not organized for me to see the charts [17] and drafts — what they are trying to [18] explain.

[19] Then I have trouble understanding [20] the charts because they blend into each other [21] because it is states that no businesses [22] are affected when all of those

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[1] ranches — since when is ranching not a [2] business? All ranches have to file income [3] taxes. All range of tax. All kinds of [4] costs, labor costs, trucking costs costs [5] and other costs the railroad [6] any of this it will I would like to [7] see the DEIS get 180-day comment period. [8] I also reserve the right to make further [9] comments on the DEIS.

[10] **BONNIE:** Thanks, Cole [11] SPEAKER: My name is I lived [12] in South Dakota and Wyoming all my life and I [13] like it here. I would hate to see the [14] railroad for a number of reasons. We [15] have only so much land in the world and [16] should it all railroads? I think not. [17] I know that

economic growth I don't [18] understand how we cannot address and we [19] don't need another railroad to haul it. We [20] need to fix there are so many birds and [21] animals that are endangered country and [22] I don't understand how we can address that.

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[1] Also from reading the DEIS there is lots of [2] information that costs DM&E [3] don't they have — pay for new lines they [4] build when they new I would [5] also like to ask for 180-day minimum [6] extension on the comment period I [7] reserve the right to make further comments

[8] **BONNIE**: Thank you very much. [9] Thank you all for honoring the time [10] agreements as well. Carolyn Johnson is next.

[11] MS. JOHNSON: My comments are going [12] to be rather general to start with because I [13] have not even begun to get into these. They [14] are so hard to understand that I'll also [15] right up front also request 180-day extension [16] because it's just unreal the amount of time [17] you would have to spend to even begin to [18] comprehend these.

[19] On this one which is Volume III-B [20] it says because paleontological resources are [21] not protected on private lands. Excuse me. [22] That's what we are trying to do by objecting

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[1] to this railroad? Most of us do protect our [2] paleontological resources. They are precious [3] to us, and I resent that statement. That is [4] not accurate. That was page 4.4-9, the first [5] paragraph.

[6] On page 4.4-11 it says the primary [7] impact to would be the direct loss of [8] forage area through its conversion to [9] railroad right of way during construction. [10] May I ask is that your understanding? That [11] is so inaccurate. That is so untrue. If it [12] were just the number of acres that wouldn't [13] even be — it would be an inconvenience. But [14] it's not the direct loss of forage area. [15] That just boggles my mind that anybody out [16] there thinks that.

[17] In the opening presentation I heard [18] something to the effect that the DM&E is [19] supposed to coordinate with all you agencies. [20] Well, I happen to know at least one agency is [21] bending over backwards to cooperate with DM&E [22] and I resent that too. The agencies involved

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[1] ought to be absolutely nonbiased and they [2] should not have higher-up orders. By the [3] way, where did the higherup orders come from [4] that our local offices and our district area [5] offices have to suddenly do an about-face [6] from what they first said when we first [7] talked to them, and now they're all — I'm [8] not saying all of you agencies, but the ones [9] of you that are out there know who you are [10] that are doing an about-face.

[11] As I understand it the written [12] comments that we all went to great lengths of [13] time during the scoping process have not even [14] been read, a lot of them haven't. Why? That [15] was really important input, wasn't it, if [16] they haven't even been read. What about [17] financially fit? We never see that anywhere. [18] We still don't know, are they financially fit [19] or not. That seems to be touted as a [20] priority.

[21] What little bit I've been able to [22] get into some of these things, one reason

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[1] because I'm busy, another reason my husband [2] takes his few minutes here or there in his [3] business day trying to digest some of them. [4] But what little I've gotten into them seems [5] to be opinions and conclusions and [6] assumptions on the basis of what is written [7] by the Surface Transportation Board or [8] whoever wrote this. I really still haven't [9] gotten an answer. I understand there's [10] cooperating agencies.

[11] But anyway, whoever wrote it, it's [12] assumptions on their part along with [13] assumptions given to them by DM&E. Now, that [14] doesn't sound very unbiased to me. I think [15] you ought to give us something we can read [16] and understand and comment on. That's fine.

[17] **BONNIE:** Carolyn, can I just [18] confirm Vern isn't here?

[19] MS. JOHNSON: He is.

[20] **BONNIE:** He is? I'm sorry. I had [21] Vern, you're next. Do you also go by [22] J.R.?

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[1] MR. JOHNSON: Pardon?

[2] BONNIE:

[3] MR. JOHNSON: I'm Vern [4] Johnson. I own a ranch. Carolyn is my wife. [5] I ranch on the Chad River (?) I have [6] some concerns about the EIS and I want to [7] address them.

[8] Why I'm concerned is that I notice [9] in the executive summary was dropped [10] from the summary, and that summary is one of [11] the documents that most people are going to [12] have time to read. All the other documents, [13] there are just too many, and I think that [14] should be in there because you did go on and [15] use it in the rest of the volumes. It's in [16] the DEIS which I appreciate.

[17] Another concern I have about that [18] same subject is on page 38 of the executive [19] summary it says fails to meet the [20] applicant's purpose and need. I think that's [21] a little bit one-sided some other needs [22] and purpose—ranchers and communities. So

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[1] again I think that needs to be in there. [2] Another thing I have to take issue [3] with is scare tactics used throughout the [4] DEIS by DM&E where they say if they don't get [5] a new system, they can't upgrade their system [6] they'll fail to be a viable transportation [7] system and which probably puts a scare to the [8] ranchers in South Dakota and farmers. and 191 that's throughout the document to see these [10] things crop up. Another one is that not [11] granting this period that their safety record [12] will go down, and they already have a [13] terrible safety record. To me that's a real [14] poor reason to rebuild a railroad because of [15] your safety record [16] Take a little exception to the [17] favoritism displayed by the Surface [18] Transportation Board. Although I know that [19] this is mandated by Congress and it says in [20] here that part of your mandate was that the [21] STB is mandated by Congress to give a [22] proposed rail construction the benefit of the

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[1] doubt. I know that's what you're supposed to [2] do, but it does crop up quite a bit in here.

[3] Another thing I see in here is that [4] a lot of the data is from DM&E — a lot of [5] the information that doesn't seem to be [6] independently acquired. Another thing [7] was put in here, and this is in the last [8] paragraph of page 2-6, Volume I, it said [9] engineers consulted landowners to identify a [10] line of locations that would avoid or [11] minimize impacts such as crossing or dividing [12] lands or causing impact to ranches. That was [13] supposedly done prior to February of '98. I [14] don't think any of us has seen those people [15] out there, and if they did come out there, [16] some of them were out there illegally. We [17] had incidents of people being out in the area [18] without any permission. I suppose that's [19] going to be talked about here

[20] Another thing I take exception to [21] is on page 73 of the executive summary, [22] paragraph ES 10.5, negotiated agreements. It

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[1] says the STB has encouraged DM&E to negotiate [2] mutually acceptable agreements of affected [3] communities and other government entities to [4] address the potential environmental impacts [5] including ways to share the costs associated [6] with the project.

[7] **BONNIE**: One minute left.

[8] MR. JOHNSON: That was a mouthful, [9] but I don't think anyone, any entity or any [10] county should have to share in this. I think [11] this is their project, and I just find it not [12] within the taxpayer's best interests to have [13] to share these costs. And you can bet the [14] DM&E will want to do that, cost-share with [15] the counties and possibly get away with it. [16] There's a couple tables I take [17] issue with, and that's table 4.4-41, Volume [18] III-B, it's got 1994 for the date in there, [19] and that's that's 6 years old. Another [20] table, 4.4-44, Volume III-B, it's got 1997 [21] property tax. I'll just in closing say that [22] I'm for option A — alternative A

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[1] alternative D — if alternative A — because [2] I think now is the time to [3] environmentally friendly and there's a lot of [4] water that runs through that and I think it's [5] time to look into that option and not build [6] the railroad. Thank you very much.

[7] **BONNIE**: Thanks. Make sure the [8] additional comments to a specific table to [9] make sure we get that in writing.

[10] Next is Glenn Hanson. Glenn, you [11] can go to that microphone right there.

[12] MR. HANSON: I'm Glenn Hanson. I [13] sure didn't real all them 2,200 pages, but I [14] did read quite a little bit of it. I will [15] agree with a lot of these other people that [16] it's inadequate and inaccurate.

[17] There's something that I'd like to [18] explain to you people up there that you [19] probably don't realize. Newcastle is our [20] closest town, our closest doctors, our [21] closest fire departments. There are quite a [22] bunch of us here that will be on the other

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[1] side of that railroad track if it's built. [2] I've been in the country a long time, but [3] there's been a few times in my wife, myself, [4] or my family that we have to get to a doctor [5] quick. Another 5 or 10 minutes might have [6] been too late.

[7] We're 42 miles from town. Some of [8] these people right here, in fact they're 50 [9] miles from town and I think they'll be on the [10] other side of the railroad track and there's [11] other people too the same way. So I just [12] wanted you people to understand that.

[13] I am concerned like everybody else [14] about acres. Like I said, the closest [15] fire department's in Newcastle, and we're one [16] of the few areas where

most all this railroad [17] one of the few areas where we actually [18] have clean air and very little noise, and we [19] sure do hate to see that disturbed. I've [20] been around — well, I'll just say this. I [21] remember back at one time when I never heard [22] of prairie fires. There wasn't enough grass

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[1] in that country to burn. I'll guarantee you [2] that we have much more grass on the ground in [3] this whole area where this railroad will run [4] across than we had 75 years ago.

[5] You're thinking maybe I'm 83 [6] years old and I've been here all my life. [7] I'm just worried about the whole situation [8] and noxious weeds that come in. The [9] railroads are famous for that. I guess [10] that's all I need to say.

[11] **BONNIE:** Thank you. Our next [12] speaker is Mayor Mike Mills.

[13] MR. MILLS: Thank you. For the [14] record, my name is Mike Mills. I'm the mayor [15] of Newcastle, Wyoming. I want to thank all [16] of you for the opportunity to speak. The [17] Newcastle community recognizes the time and [18] complexity of this issue and the time that [19] you have spent. Also the cooperating [20] agencies, the time that you have spent.

[21] It's been three years. A lot of [22] water under the bridge. I stand here

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[1] speaking on behalf of the majority of the [2] Newcastle community in favor of the expansion [3] project. We see some of the benefits as [4] follows. Creating new immediate jobs and [5] long-term permanent employment to help [6] replace jobs lost with the recent [7] closure.

[8] The completed project will increase [9] the taxable valuation of Weston County [10] taxes will be paid. This in turn will help [11] taxes for property owners low, continue [12] ongoing funding needs of government services. [13] Local business and service industries will be [14] strengthened and become more stable and will [15] grow.

[16] Real estate markets will strengthen [17] and stabilize. The project will bring an [18] increase in population. The Newcastle [19] community supports the growth manifested in [20] the survey done in April of 2000 by the [21] Chamber of Commerce. One of the challenges [22] small communities face is sustaining and

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[1] creating new business. This project will [2] help that process by increasing the need for [3] goods and services; taxes paid to stabilize [4] funding for continued operation of public [5] schools, hospitals,

fire departments, law [6] enforcement, road creation and maintenance, [7] and other necessary government services.

[8] The DM&E project when complete will [9] make the delivery of coal and coal companies [10] more efficient and help reduce coal train [11] congestion.

[12] In closing, I'd like to repeat that [13] I believe the majority of the Newcastle [14] public supports the project, and we are also [15] aware that DM&E has offered landowners and [16] communities on the proposed lines the [17] opportunity to work together to help mitigate [18] the potential impacts of the project.

[19] Thank you, and appreciate your [20] time.

[21] **BONNIE:** Thank you, mayor. Our [22] next speaker is Jean Harshbarger.

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[1] MS. HARSHBARGER: People are [2] addressing a lot of my concerns already. [3] However, for one thing, Mr. Mills, he says [4] that the community of Newcastle supports [5] this. I'm sure they do. However, if they do [6] support the whole plan, they should support [7] alternative D which brings the railroad [8] through Newcastle instead of 31 miles out in [9] the country where nobody can get the benefit [10] of it except for the fires.

[11] On speaking of the fires, it says [12] there will be an improved fire-suppression [13] plan or something like this in place. Where [14] can we see this fire-suppression plan? Where [15] can we get a copy of it to see what they [16] have? I know where there are other fires on [17] railroads, the railroads do nothing to fight [18] fires. They do nothing to pay for the people [19] who do fight the fires, and they do nothing [20] to pay for the damage they do if they can get [21] away with it, which they do a great many [22] times I guess.

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[1] Another thing is the safety. As [2] Mr. Hanson was saying, a lot of us will be on [3] the other side of this railroad. Are they [4] proposing to put in separated grade [5] crossings? I feel they should at least put [6] in separated crossings on the county roads. [7] And this is a very nifty thing, they could [8] put in cross arms with reflectors on the back 191 side so you can see them from either [10] direction. That doesn't sound like much of a [11] safety feature to me. But separated [12] crossings would not be quite so bad. They [13] would have to be large enough so that people [14] can haul large equipment through and things [15] like that. Another thing, and this doesn't [16] impact Wyoming, but it has been very me [17] in reading through this where they have [18] proposed bypasses that I think the first [19] in Rochester. They want communities to help [20] pay for these bypasses. This is a silly [21] idea. The communities don't want the trains [22] in the first place. They should not have to

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[1] put their valuable money into a bypass for an [2] enterprise that it intends to try and get [3] through here and make a bunch of money. If [4] they're going to make all this money, they'd [5] better pay for their enterprise. We should [6] not have to worry about communities having to [7] pay part of the cost of this. I find it very [8] suspect that so many places through this [9] Draft EIS — this has been mentioned, but it [10] says, "the DM&E says," or "we assume," or "it [11] is asserted that," — these are not facts. [12] These are just somebody's explanation to make [13] something that looks good. Especially when [14] these things come from the DM&E straight from [15] them, I do not see how we can consider them [16] factual information. This should be nothing [17] but factual information, and that is not the [18] way it is.

[19] I guess that's enough.I know. [20] One other thing. With the errors in mileage [21] when they said that there was too many more [22] miles to go — alternative D.They're

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[1] assuming something there that may not be [2] true. In Wyoming to go on alternative D as [3] opposed to alternative C, the difference in [4] miles in Wyoming is very minute, and it would [5] alleviate a lot of our problems. We would [6] not be fighting this thing if they would stay [7] on that are already there and go through [8] the towns that want them and put the jobs in 191 the tax base where these people want them. [10] We don't want our lives disrupted by a [11] railroad. I think on these grade crossings, [12] any place where there's school children or [13] mail carriers that have to go across them, [14] that at the very least should preclude grade [15] crossings. Thank you.

[16] **BONNIE:** Thank you. Next is Clara [17] Wilson,

[18] MS. WILSON: My name is Clara [19] Wilson. I live 30 miles south of Newcastle [20] along the Chad River on Ranch Lake Road (?) [21] on a ranch my grandparents bought me in 1980. [22] The DEIS arrived about 3 weeks ago at a very

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[1] busy time for ranchers so I haven't read a [2] whole lot. I intend to make further comments [3] later after I've had time to read more.

[4] The proposed railroad would cross [5] land that belongs to my brother that we have [6] leased for about 35 years. This is a

great [7] concern. There's another concern. The route [8] we go up, Bobcat Creek, a tributary of the [9] Chad River that we have adjudicated water [10] rights, and they are dated 1905 and 1943. [11] Flood water from this watershed area is used [12] to irrigate about 80 acres of hay land on [13] state land. Even though there was a drought [14] here in our area, there was enough runoff to [15] irrigate this field earlier this year.

[16] The DEIS is outdated. The [17] information, a lot of it is at least two [18] years old, and some of it a lot older than [19] that. The Chad River in Medford County (?) [20] and Weston County both have a severe weed [21] problem, enough so to justify the of the [22] Chad River property resource management plan

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[1] in the fall of 1999. The CRRM is working [2] very hard in conjunction with various state [3] and county officials to solve the spread of [4] noxious weeds. A railroad will only [5] intensify the problem. Until about two years [6] ago the Chad River was listed as an impaired [7] stream. With the help of nine or ten natural [8] resource people and cooperation of the [9] landowners it has been removed from this [10] list. We are now concerned with coal dust, [11] diesel smoke, or silt, diesel, or other toxic [12] waste falling or running into the river and [13] again creating a problem.

[14] An archeological survey was never [15] done on our land. Both my brother and I have [16] told representatives of DM&E including their [17] archeological surveyors they were to [18] contact me in regards to this property. In [19] early-July of 1999, I received a map. I'll [20] show you this map. They requested permission [21] to do an archeological survey (?) of the [22] University of South Dakota. That had two

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[1] routes on it, and it was a very primitive [2] map. I told her that the map was [3] unsatisfactory because invading the [4] watershed on the creek where we have water [5] rights. We wanted to see a map that showed [6] the width of the right-ofway where the [7] would be made and where would come from [8] and how much it would impair this watershed [9] area. We also asked that the surveyors [10] identify themselves and show proof of [11] insurance. In a few days Ms. Hodging's [12] co-worker sent the very same map, but it [13] had one route highlighted. Again I told Ms. [14] Hodging what I needed to see in a map. The [15] next time, they sent an enlargement of the [16] first one, and that's all the maps I've [17] received.

[18] Then I got a phone call from [19]

another co-worker [20] BONNIE: One minute.

[21] MS. WILSON: He told me to come to [22] a room at the Fountain Inn in Newcastle and I

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[1] could look at a map, but I cannot have one [2] because it was copyrighted. He later called [3] back and told my husband I should call [4] Mr. Thornhill. I tried to do this. I was [5] told Mr. Thornhill was in Rapid City for a [6] meeting. The Rapid City Journal stated that [7] he and were there attempting to promote [8] the DM&E project to the Indians. Then [9] Ms. Hodging sent me a letter on July 7th [10] threatening, "if you do not want your land [11] surveyed we will skip it and it will not be [12] included in the environmental impact [13] statement." This threat has been carried [14] out. There's very little information on any [15] route South Dakota.

[16] **BONNIE:** Thank you. If you can [17] please submit that in writing that would be [18] great. Jerry Phelps has joined us hasn't he? [19] Jim Darlington? She's talking about you. [20] Jerry Phelps. Dilts. Dilts. You decided to [21] speak, Jerry? sorry about that.

[22] MR. DILTS: My name is Jerry Dilts,

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[1] D-i-l-t-s, and I live south of West Wyoming [2] on Animal Creek (?). Some years ago the [3] folks at Northern Railroad built a railroad [4] into Lenthorn Junction (?) to haul coal from [5] the mines in the Powder River Basin. The [6] folks from Northern came to Lenthorn [7] about changing the routes of the railroad to [8] accommodate landowners and to [9] mitigate the damages. The DM&E Railroad has [10] come . The DM&E Railroad wants to put a [11] track near Animal Creek cattle pasture. [12] This makes a huge impact on my [13] operation. I was a member of the landowner's [14] advisory board to the DM&E Railroad. [15] This board was organized so that the railroad [16] could better negotiate with the landowner.

[17] Through this board I tried to [18] convince DM&E Railroad to relocate either [19] north or south of the proposed route. I have [20] explained to DM&E Railroad that the [21] existing. I feel this is unnecessary [22] for the DM&E Railroad to build an additional

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[1] railroad to export coal when the existing [2] rails and tracks are already in place. By [3] allowing this railroad and its to be [4] built, the management of wildlife and [5] grasslands will be greatly affected.
[6] I support Alternative A in the [7]

proposed Draft EIS. Thank you.

[8] **BONNIE:** Okay, thank you. Can we [9] have Jim Darlington?

[10] MR. DARLINGTON: Okav. Sounds like [11] it's on now. I'd like to thank you folks for [12] giving me the opportunity to comment on this [13] proposal. I had several questions and [14] concerns on this matter, but I noticed in one [15] of the overheads there at the first there [16] were three items there that happen to fit [17] with three of the questions I had. Where one [18] overhead said the Surface Transportation [19] Board considers transportation aspects, [20] number one, being the financial fitness of [21] the applicant. And I would like to ask if [22] DM&E is any further along with their funding

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[1] for this project than they were in June [2] of 1997 when Mr. Shieffer told us it was [3] right — coming right around the corner.

[4] Number two, on was the public [5] need for this proposal. Much of the EIS [6] seems to be built around a predetermined [7] conclusion. For example, in Volume I, [8] page 2-54, it is stated that: [9] Nonconstruction alternatives were not [10] discussed because they "would not advance the [11] applicant's goals." This EIS is supposed to [12] be a discussion of the environmental impacts, [13] I believe, and the public need, I believe, is [14] the continued generation of electricity, not [15] necessarily the hauling of coal.

[16] Your third item you asked was the [17] impact on other rail services. Okay, that [18] relates to one of my questions. Do the coal [19] mines that are to be serviced by this [20] proposal have plans to construct additional [21] and separate access for DM&E? The [22] present bottlenecks from just driving around

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[1] the highway and watching trains stacked up [2] behind each other seems to be at the mines [3] themselves. So I, again, would ask how this [4] problem can be solved? It looks like it's [5] going to be exacerbated with one more [6] transporter waiting in line.

[7] You know, I would like to know what [8] the recyclable commodities are that may be [9] hauled on this proposed track. On Volume VI, [10] page C-75, this is mentioned briefly. DM&E [11] mentioned that in their original submission I [12] believe, but I have never heard of what these [13] recyclable commodities are. In France, they [14] recycle nuclear waste, so I would like an [15] explanation on that.

[16] Now as mentioned before, there [17] are many charts and graphs in the EIS

that [18] made absolutely no sense or are [19] indecipherable because everything is the same [20] shade of black and you can't differentiate [21] anything. There is a very misleading [22] statement about what national are in

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[1] effect. And listed on page 4.2-25, Volume [2] III-A: Much is only 40-acre tracts that are [3] inaccessible. Well, in looking at a map that [4] I had on your national grassland, this [5] goes through one 40-acre isolated tract. It [6] goes through several large accessible tracts, [7] one of the very first ones being a proposed [8] special interest area. So I think that needs [9] to be corrected.

[10] Okay, let's see, achievement of [11] the 1 percent grade I believe will be very [12] difficult through much of the chosen route. [13] Volume 1, figures 2-15 and 16 show profiles [14] on the rejected Alternative D. Why are not [15] these same type of profiles available for [16] Alternative B and C? That would make it much [17] easier for people working on mitigation on [18] this project, which I was involved in being [19] ranch manager Association on part of the [20] Thunder Basin national grassland. I was told [21] this information wasn't available, so we just [22] had to guess. They used an average for the

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[1] whole thing. And — but in looking at some [2] of the — in one minute · engineering work, [3] a 100-foot cut would result in [4] an 80 - 848-foot; a 100-foot fill would [5] result in a 648-foot. The in [6] Alternative B flood plain at the [7] convergence of and Spring Creek (?). [8] That is completely government water on a [9] not-so-rare basis. I mean, the engineers [10] might like a challenge, but this can't even [11] be seriously considered. An extension would [12] be beneficial would be nice, but this [13] should only take place after the proper [14] revising of this Draft Environmental Impact [15] Statement that had been created. Thank you.

[16] **BONNIE:** Thank you. Next we have [17] Richard Rabern.

[18] MR. RABERN: I'm Richard Rabern [19] from the Western Canyon Pass (?). I [20] haven't had an opportunity to read the EIS, [21] but at this time I would like to ask for at [22] least 180 days. We have asked, through

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[1] the Wheaton Pass Council, several times for [2] the Wheaton management program which we have [3] not received. One thing that I would like [4] you people to request is sort of reseeding, [5] revegetating certified seeds, certified . [6]

Where is the ballast for the tracks coming [7] from? Are they coming from the certified [8] pits? The gravel for the roads, are they [9] coming from certified pits? These are [10] basically my comments on mostly questions we [11] have asked and never got the answers to.

[12] The big concern at this point is [13] the proposed track running through the Black [14] Hill prairie dogs are threatened, but [15] which is also an environment for [16] burrowing owls, black footed ferrets, the [17] mountain are a big concern. We are [18] looking at the environment. We got.

[19] **BONNIE:** Thank you. Our next [20] speaker is — is Corby Myer here? Okay. [21] Anne and Kenneth Cassens? Anne? Anne, is [22] Kenneth here as well?

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[1] MS. CASSENS: All right. [2] members of the STB and cooperating agencies, [3] thank you for allowing me to comment on the [4] Draft EIS regarding the new DM&E line. My [5] name's Annie Cassens and my husband and I are [6] landowners. We own approximately 3,300 acres [7] in Far River County in South Dakota along [8] Creek. Prior to 1995, we were primarily [9] beef cattle ranchers, but because of the poor [10] agriculture/economic trends of the past few [11] years, we have broadened our scope of [12] business to include several other [13] enterprises, including grass seed harvesting, [14] renting outfit gear for a hunting service, [15] and a bed-and-breakfast that's located on the [16] ranch. The new DM&E approximately [17] one-half mile of land to be leased, as well [18] as two full miles of our beef land and will [19] take about . We had been cooperating [20] with the DM&E planning process late in 1997 [21] when we were identified as landowners [22] and we presently have a landowner

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[1] compensation and mitigation of \$3 million in [2] place.

[3] Our ranch is unique in that we [4] have 2,000 acres which is fenced for [5] alternative livestock. Fence that is 8-foot [6] high would require — it's very expensive to [7] build and approximately 8 miles of — 800 [8] miles of fencing, that type of fencing. We [9] will be enclosing another 1,000-acre parcel [10] as soon as we know the right-of-way going [11] forth with the new railroad. The proposed [12] DM&E line will go through a corner of the [13] presently enclosed area and will bisect the [14] new area we will - we plan to enclose. We [15] will also have no water source on the land; [16] it will be cut off by the rail line.

[17] The DM&E representatives from the [18] very beginning have been fair, polite, and [19] professional to us. They have

considered our [20] input and our special circumstances, and have [21] incorporated our suggestions into the [22] mitigation agreement considering our need for

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[1] an underpass that would be big enough for elk [2] and a casement for a water line and special [3] fencing requirements. They continue to allow [4] us to have input into the design and planning [5] of the line. Yes, their engineers did come [6] with our permission and did move the line [7] away from Plum Creek (?), which was one of [8] our concerns. And the archaeologists who [9] have had a contract for the study also did a [10] survey on the land.

[11] I wish to comment briefly on the [12] four points. First, I'd like to comment on [13] the economic impact the DM&E might have. We [14] believe that many people say they want [15] development and when it's offered, they don't [16] want this development. They are concerned [17] about losing population, decreasing class [18] sizes in the schools and losing businesses in [19] our towns, yet they're against every form of [20] development they're offered. We believe this [21] railroad can be a good neighbor if it [22] continues to be developed responsibly. We

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[1] believe it could help small communities by [2] creating jobs, increasing the tight space, [3] and bolstering the population for our area.

[4] From a global economic viewpoint, [5] it makes sense to build an efficient route to [6] take low sulphur coal to the eastern markets, [7] which currently rely heavily on the [8] types of coal which are much more detrimental [9] to the environment. It also makes sense to [10] provide a route to maintain Midwest corn and [11] other grains to economic. I support any [12] project that can make us less dependent on [13] foreign energy resources.

[14] Agriculture is a failing business [15] for many people involved. We would not have [16] survived in this business if we had not [17] diversified. Western South Dakota is not [18] prime agriculture land. Away from the lure [19] of the Black Hills, small towns along the [20] current DM&E line are struggling to get the [21] new prices and if revitalization of the old [22] DM&E line is not approved these small towns

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[1] with their don't have a chance.

[2] Another economic opportunity [3] is tourism through possible passenger train [4] service. Tourism brings \$1.23 billion into [5] South Dakota.

[6] Finally, there's the issue of [7] so-called noise pollution. Our house is [8] currently 4 miles from B&S (?), the train [9]. A new line will one of them [10] to the house. We're not worried. If you can [11] control the volume of your son's boombox, [12]. I believe change is here to stay. If [13] it isn't the DM&E interrupting our life, it [14] will be someone else. I hope we can learn to [15] roll with the changes and not waste energy [16] fighting change. Thank you very much.

[17] BONNIE: Thank you. Is V.L. [18] Childers in? Okay. Ben Hobbs?

[19] MR. HOBBS: As a landowner, DM&E [20] has been more than cooperative with me [21] personally. The contract for sale has more [22] than doubled, but and they've been more

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[1] cooperative about access, .

[2] Another point that I would like to [3] make is that years ago when the Northwestern [4] prepared the connector line from they -[5] there were lots of people who voted for it. [6] But most of us in the livestock business, you [7] know, how can be. A lot of this land [8] was actually improved by the railroad because [9] of better grassland utilization. And you [10] find a lot of the people that originally were [11] so opposed to this project actually had [12] better things to say about the railroad now [13] than they did before it was built because of [14] their grassland utilization and better access [15] and better potential. That's all I have to [16] say.

[17] BONNIE: Thank you. Ithink [18] Dana is Dana Gordon here? Okay. Mark [19] Tubbs?

[20] MR. TUBBS: My name's Mark Tubbs. [21] I'm from Edgemont, South Dakota. I'm just [22] going to bring up one thing before I.I

[1] live in an area, Edgemont, South Dakota, the [2] largest railroad in the free world runs [3] through Edgemont, South Dakota. It has [4] whomever's comfortable to the south of [5] Edgemont and then there's the train . [6] The largest railroad in the free world goes [7] through there. There is a main street on [8] Edgemont — in Edgemont.

[9] Ten years ago, Edgemont had the [10] highest taxes per thousand valuation in the [11] state of South Dakota. The railroad does not [12] pay taxes because they're a utility and [13] they're tax everyone else. It reverts [14] back to the landowners and the businesses, [15] and DM&E engineers Northern [16] Railroad. Right now, Northern Railroad [17] has a lawsuit with the community of Edgemont [18] from Fall River County and they have to pay a [19] million dollars back. [20] Thank you for the opportunity to [21] speak at this hearing. My father as well as [22] myself have at least . We have land

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[1] directly across from this — from the [2] proposed line to the northeast corner, the [3] northeast corner to Section 21, the northwest [4] corner, the northwest corner to Section 22, [5] the northwest corner of Section 22. [6] This property lies in the Cheyenne River [7] flood plain and . This land starts at [8] the Wyoming state line and west for [9]. This land by runoff ride the [10] range forever. The proposed line from [11] the hills down through the into South [12] Dakota away from our property. Tubbs Land & [13] Cattle LLC is in the process of obtaining the [14] water rights in . This water right has [15] the priority dated September 7, 2000, with [16] the temporary of 30, 170. If this [17] railroad was built, I would like to think [18] that the drainage should be left the same as [19] it is for the last 10,000 years. Our [20] land should be protected and focus of scope [21] will allow water to pass. Coal dust has [22] not been addressed in the EIS.

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[1] If one thing not a problem [2] the Santa Fe train then breathe deeply. [3] The effects of the river moving on the [4] as to whether each given area, the soil [5] were all here. The issue need to [6] be addressed. We already Canadian [7] and less than half of them in the Cheyenne [8] River Valley. This new with all its old [9] soil season.

[10] We wanted to mention an important [11] . After the railroads are built, who [12] will take care of these problems? DM&E has [13] shown that they care less about noxious weeds [14] on their existing line through Fall River [15] County, South Dakota. This is a very [16] expensive and hard problem to solve. This is [17] not an engineering, this is a biological [18] problem. The railroad should mitigate the [19] weed problem before they have one, which they [20] will.

[21] In closing, my father, mother, and [22] myself will not be compensated by the

- [1] railroad for taking private property. But we 121 are because of the air pollution, [3] water sediments and construction, weed [4] infestation affect valuable property. These [5] issues need to be addressed. Thank you.
- [6] BONNIE: Thank you. We have two [7] folks who weren't able to attend. I think in [8] that, so now that you could maybe [9] Richard Wayguns (?) I think, is it, or [10] Dennis Reagan (?). Dennis Reagan, why [11] don't you read, and then Nancy [12]

before you.

[13] MR. DENNIS: This is Raymond Dennis [14] of, Wyoming. I'm in favor of [15] Alternative A and alternative. Now that [16] I went back to the .Mostly, [17] impacts that are listed in Volume III, [18] Chapter 4, page 4, part 3-2 are not [19] quantified and are not assertions made [20] — and are essentially assertions made [21] by the . Where are the studies that [22] actually show the industries would suffer if

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[1] there were no DM&E? We know the plan is [2] already to a new loading facility on the [3] land near Upton, Wyoming. In Moorcroft, [4] Wyoming, there's facility for the South [5] Dakota cement plant and in Newscastle, [6] there's a loading facility for try [7] to explain it. Both of these facilities are [8] on the BSF (?) line. There are [9] facilities in South Dakota, all of them . [10] Where in the facilities and others? [11] What percent of South Dakota does DM&E [12] hold? Why was this not studied? People are [13] required to Section 1503.24 of the code of [14] federal regulations that the agency shall [15] ensure the professional integrity of the [16] discussions, analyses, and environmental [17] impact statement. Mere assertions do not [18] qualify as a professional analysis.

[19] I request more time to study the [20] Draft EIS. Ninety days is an insufficient [21] amount of time to study a document that [22] weighs more than 30 pounds and is more

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[1] than 5,000 pages long. Even though I am 121 semi-retired. I have not had the necessary [3] time to accurately study and respond to this [4] document. A 180day extension would be [5] reasonable. The is even more difficult [6] to . I live 70 miles from Gillette, [7] which is the closest complete copy. This [8] huge document takes hours to study and cannot [9] be understood by a few hours in a public [10] library. A November 29th deadline is [11] unacceptable and confusing to people all [12] documents may be not involved in the same [13] time frame. A lengthy extension should be [14] granted and it should be no earlier than the [15] DEI's deadline.

[16] I'm proposing amendment, the [17] national grassland is no place to invest [18] operations like railroads. Provisions are [19] there pipeline, but the impact of a [20] railroad is far greater than for . In [21] fact, there's no comparison. The pipeline is [22] underground and has its impact only during

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[1] construction. A railroad is like a huge wall [2] across the grasslands, damaging

the wildlife [3] scenes part of the prairie ecosystem. [4] This is not to hide any impact from the [5] federal lands just because the farming [6] community the majority of the impact [7] comes from grassland owners. These [8] grasslands for the federal lands to [9] become without their private lands. [10] The Forest Service in both and the [11] harmful effects of this project and we can [12] conclude that the is an environmentally [13] friendly company. What evidence do you have [14] of environmental conscience?

[15] I and I'm litigation with [16] a former rancher who was supposed to become [17] an unwilling partner in the of the [18] grasslands. Well, I'm not an integration [19] developed by DM&E with their own [20] employees, these people are paid for their [21] services, and is not acceptable [22] mitigation. By issuing a license the Surface

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[1] Transportation Board prevents the use of [2] to take land from private citizens. The [3] Draft EIS is difficult to follow and read. [4] There's no index. The numbering system is [5] very difficult to follow because chapters [6] and pages. Generally, the [7] construction of the EIS is disgraceful. [8] Instead of trying to make the DEIS available [9] to a large number of people, you sought to [10] information inaccessible to the ordinary [11] person. You sought to material by [12] having it available — you sought to limit [13] those receiving the material and howand [14] now have it available CD, which is [15] unaccessible for anyone who does not have an [16] up-to-date computer system.

[17] BONNIE: One minute.

[18] MR. DENNIS: Even then, [19] they're difficult to read, income tax [20] and agriculture, just listing the impacts [21] inconvenience. Where are the studies [22] that show whether these are impacts or not?

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[1] People are required by Section 1502.22 [2] information is not readily available, but [3] information then the patience they [4] show. Studies of couldn't be [5] completed without great cost. These lines [6] were built in the recent past and [7] economic impacts, but impacts on wildlife as [8] well. And that's what the DEIS is [9] document essentially unavailable to me. This [10] is not fair.

[11] You have not studied Alternative D [12] and essentially dismissed it at the request [13] of the applicant. Also, where are the [14] studies on the joint line? Studies of [15] the STB raises this possibility and there [16] appears to be no

mention of this alternative. [17] The safety of the new line is really a good [18] question. so that there will be no [19] until we. The most in South Dakota [20] highway and north-south arteries [21] area of . I'm opposed to granting the [22] license to DM&E. I'm opposed to license

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[1] the grasslands and I am opposed to .[2] I'm sorry I couldn't read it any faster .

[3] (Laughter)

[4] **BONNIE**: Ray, thank you, as [5] well. Great. Nancy, do you want to read the [6]?

[7] **MS. DARNELL:** I'm sorry that [8] Marlene (?) couldn't be here today because of [9] the road conditions. Marlene is our state [10] representative from House District 1.

[11] The comments that I make today are [12] based on a quick review of the Draft [13] Environment Impact Statement. This DEIS that [14] we are to comment on weighs more than 30 [15] pounds and has been very difficult to read [16] and understand. I am requesting on behalf of [17] my constituents that you extend the comment [18] period a minimum of 180 days. To expect [19] citizens and businesspeople to comment on [20] such a gargantuan project in a short time [21] during some of the busiest months of the year [22] is ridiculous. Further, to require comment

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[1] which is to submit 11 copies of comment over [2] five pages is putting an unnecessary burden [3] on elderly or lower income people who usually [4] do not have home copiers or . Such [5] requirements discourage full participation by [6] the public laws require that the [7] public be allowed full participation in the [8] environmental process. [9] I am also formally requesting an [10] extension of time to comment on the Army [11] Corps of Engineers' permits. The [12] comment period should be extended to coincide [13] with the comment period on the DEIS. Many [14] people may not even realize that the comment [15] period if more abbreviated because these [16] indicate that comments can be made for both.

[17] The Corps applications are also [18] very lengthy. Many of my constituents live [19] 90 miles or more from any of the libraries, [20] Rapid City and Gillette, that contain [21] complete copies of the document. When you [22] compare the size of the state's and civic

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[1] versions with the full copy, you realize that [2] the local versions are simply not adequate [3] for commenting. At the very minimum, that [4] should be at each of

ill-conceived project.

the local libraries [5] along with the statespecific information.

[6] One major concern is for the [7] property rights of the landowners along the [8] route. DM&E gets the right, which [9] under Wyoming law does not offer adequate [10] protection to the landowner. A railroad that [11] cuts through an operating farm or ranch will [12] cause economic hardship as well as a hefty [13] decrease in quality of life. The working [14] landscapes are an important part of the [15] appeal that Wyoming has for tourists and [16] hunters, other major businesses that will be [17] impacted by continuing industrialization of [18] the state.

[19] Another concern is that the coal [20] mining industry is scaling back production so [21] that another railroad is not only [22] unnecessary, but also financially infeasible.

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[1] For the STB to issue a permit that can hang [2] open for a number of years while the [3] applicant searches vainly for investors is [4] unfair to landowners all along the line who [5] will not be able to make plans for [6] improvements or additions to their businesses [7] or they may make it difficult for them to [8] sell or lease property. A major defect of [9] the DEIS mitigation for landowners. The [10] landowner and the applicant, [11] which does nothing more for landowners than [12] the minimum required by Wyoming law. The [13] landowners in my district should not have to [14] sacrifice their land or lifestyle for the [15] benefit of a privately owned rail company.

[16] The Powder River Basin is presently [17] served by two of the largest railroads in the [18] U.S., who have made expensive upgrades to [19] their coal-hauling line. They actively [20] compete for the business of hauling coal, so [21] a third line is an unnecessary duplication of [22] service that will unnecessarily impact the

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[1] national grasslands and the private lands in [2] the area.

[3] The DEIS is difficult to read [4] because there's so much repetition. There's [5] no index so that the reader can follow a [6] subject throughout the document. Many terms [7] that may not be commonly known, such as [8] hydrophytic, are not defined. Even common [9] terms, such as business, need definition as [10] it appears the ranches and farms are not [11] considered businesses. The references to [12] various are difficult to follow because [13] of the obscure numbering system and the fact [14] that some pages are not numbered at all. The [15] graphs of election due to many . [16] Many charts and graphs are located a number [17] of pages away from the reading that explains [18] them.

[19] The maps in the DEIS are [20] inadequate. The maps are inadequate. They [21] do not show the existing railroad or the [22] county roads. The maps in the Corps document

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[1] are, at first glance, better as they are in [2] color and delineate the wetlands and the [3] streams. But by closer examination you find [4] that the county roads and even the main [5] highways are mislabeled. In northern Laramie [6] County and southern Weston County, Highway 85 [7] is labeled as Highway 18. Highway 415 runs [8] through Weston County, ends at the county [9] line in the Corps document and is simply not [10] shown on the maps of Campbell County. Other [11] roads in western Weston County are [12] mislabeled, making it difficult to understand [13] where the railroad is really projected to be. [14] None of them actually show where they'll put [15] the right of way.

[16] Since the rail line's projected to [17] cross many nature divides and stream [18] drainages, we know there will be massive cuts [19] and fills. Landowners have a right to know [20] how much of their property they'll be taking. [21] Maps in the EIS have no milepost markers so [22] the location sightings cannot be determined.

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[1] There are generally inadequate mitigation [2] requirements with much depending on the good [3] will and environmental sensitivity of the [4] applicant. For such a major project and with [5] the limited resources that DM&E presently [6] has, there will be much pressure to cut [7] corners. In fact, the applicant will have [8] every incentive to minimize cost and, [9] therefore, mitigation wherever possible in [10] order to compete with U.P. (?) and P&SA (?). [11] I'm also concerned that the air quality of [12] the national parks and monuments in the area [13] will be further impacted by the . She [14] goes on to say complete in many of the [15] areas.

[16] In conclusion, I want to reiterate [17] our request for a 180-day extension for [18] comment with the Corps of Engineers comment [19] deadline being on the same schedule. I [20] further request that a second draft be [21] written to correct deficiencies in this [22] document. Thank you.

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[1] **BONNIE:** Thank you. Find out how [2] many pages we can fit in in exactly 5 [3] minutes. Great. Thank you. Okay, Robert [4] Harshbarger.

[5] MAJOR HARSHBARGER: Good afternoon, [6] I'm Major Robert Harshbarger, President of [7] the Weston County Farm Bureau. I'm [8] presenting the following comments and on [9] behalf of myself as management and [10] project, 20 or so Farm Bureau members and our [11] neighbors whose land and ranching operations [12] will be directly impacted by the construction [13] of this

[14] The Weston County Farm Bureau is in [15] favor and supports the no-action alternative [16] to the Draft EIS for the following reasons. [17] The very foundation of the constitutional [18] rights of our rural community as landowners [19] are being challenged at this moment by the [20] DM&E, a private company designed to profit at [21] the expense of a few the whole [22] protection of the fight for property rights

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[1] is not being consistent. The full protection [2] of the private property rights is not being [3] consistent with the obtainment of important [4] public goals. Government bodies must be [5] willing to respect the private property [6] rights as they respect any other civil [7] liberty. also be willing to be [8] creative in finding solutions to the problems [9] of public importance outside of rights [10] of property owners.

[11] An individual's right to acquire, [12] own, and enjoy property has long been [13] recognized as being the most fundamental of [14] civil rights and foundation of all other [15] civil rights. Those who framed and ratified [16] the Constitution and the Bill of Rights [17] enjoyed these rights as being natural [18] liberties that pre-existed amendment of [19] the Constitution. The framers of the [20] Constitution considered the protection of [21] property rights to be one of the primary [22] purposes of the government. Private property

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[1] rights, which are among the most basic rights [2] in American culture, reigned supreme and [3] all consideration that has to do with any [4] governmental judicial, legislative, [5] executive, or regulatory action. We believe [6] that the right to own, enjoy, and profit from [7] one's own property is the most basic and [8] fundamental right of our society, and that [9] right must not be infringed upon.

[10] It is our intent for all the fine [11] citizens of this republic and these United [12] States of America to protect our individual [13] private property rights as guaranteed to us [14] by the Constitution of the United States of [15] America and the Constitution of the sovereign [16]

state of Wyoming. We are guaranteed life, [17] liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We [18] are not guaranteed success, but only the [19] right to attempt to achieve a success and [20] remain secure within our property and our [21] individual rights are not interference [22] from government.

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[1] The Constitution does not guarantee [2] Kevin Shieffer and his DM&E railroad [3] will be a successful and profitable [4] operation. He's not guaranteed that. The [5] Constitution does not guarantee the citizens [6] of the Midwest cheap electricity or any [7] electricity at all. The Constitution does [8] not guarantee the American people cheap [9] gasoline, cheap food, cheap transportation, [10] cheap housing, or whatever. The American [11] citizen is only guaranteed his right to his [12] life, his right to his liberty, and his right [13] to his property.

[14] From the Fifth Amendment of the [15] U.S. Constitution: "No person shall be [16] deprived of life, liberty, or property [17] without due process of law." The 14th [18] Amendment: "No state shall deprive any [19] person of life, liberty, or property without [20] due process." Wyoming's Article I, [21] Declaration of —

[22] BONNIE: One minute.

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[1] MAJOR HARSHBARGER: Also

enforces [2] the U.S. Constitution. But Section VII, [3] absolute arbitrary power over the lives and [4] liberty and property of republic, not [5] even in the largest majority. Here in the [6] sovereign state of Wyoming, all our elected [7] officials from the city councils to the [8] county commissioners to the state legislators [9] and to the governor himself take an oath of [10] office that reads in part: "I, whatever your [11] name is, do solemnly swear or affirm that I [12] will support, obey, and defend the [13] Constitution of the United States and the [14] Constitution of this state, and I will [15] discharge my duties in office whether it be [16] commissioner, town council, legislator, with [17] fidelity."

[18] As the mentioned earlier, the [19] primary purpose of government is the [20] protection of its citizens from . You [21] who are sitting here before me this evening, [22] federal employees, have charged to work

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[1] out a solution on the DM&E's request to [2] operation for the public good. Is it [3] really a public good? As federal employees [4] and civil servants, you are not only — also [5] in — are you not also in charge and have a [6] duty to support and defend the Constitution [7] of the

United States of America? Didn't you, [8] when you accepted to work as a federal [9] employee, accept the responsibility of [10] obeying the Constitution?

[11] Thank you for your time. I'm sorry [12] to be cut short. I have a few more words [13]. I reserve the right.

[14] **BONNIE:** Yes. Actually, what we'd [15] like to do right now is take about a 5- [16] or 10-minute break, so — and is there [17] folks that didn't speak at all? to sign [18] up. We'll probably go on another [19] half-hour, 40 minutes, or so when we come [20] back from our break. So if you want to sign [21] up 3- to 5-minute time frame, we can [22] take a few more speakers. We'll also, as

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[1] mentioned, if you have any questions, we [2] can take a look at those. You have to [3] and we'll in response to those. So [4] we'll take a break now. It's about — it's [6] (Recess)

[7] **BONNIE:** The question is — can [8] everyone hear me? The question is: Will the [9] STB grant a license to DM&E Railroad if the [10] majority of landowners along oppose the [11] building of the new railroad? And I just [12] wanted to make sure that everyone understands [13] that nobody knows what the Board is going to [14] do. I certainly don't and neither do my [15] colleagues. Our job is to make sure that the [16] Board has all the information in front of it [17] before they make the decision because that's [18] our job do that to make sure that when [19] we finish with the environmental review [20] process, the Board has all the information it [21] needs to make a decision on this case. Now [22] what that decision is going to be only the

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[1] board knows eventually. But our job is to [2] make sure that they take a hard look at the [3] environmental impact before they make a final [4] decision.

[5] Okay, thank you. All right, so Ann [6] Wehri is my first speaker.

[7] MS. WEHRI: I appreciate the [8] opportunity to speak to you tonight, and I [9] hope that you actually read the comments that [10] people are making because they are sincere [11] and we sure hope you're listening rather than [12] just going through the motions. I personally [13] think Newscastle's the majority of [14] the Newscastle committee is in favor. Many [15] of us, including me, are in the Newscastle [16] community and we are not in favor of this [17] project.

[18] In reference to some earlier [19] comments, I would say that our experience [20] with DM&E's president has been quite [21] different. I think Shieffer has more [22] personality and a looser

tongue than Al Gore.

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[1] And every time he's been to Newscastle he has [2] been sneaky and deceptive and he has a very [3] convenient memory. And also, I have to agree [4] ag is hurting. And if the government [5] agencies continue to stick it to us, they may [6] not have to worry about foreign oil sources, [7] they may have to worry about foreign food [8] sources. And if you think a country can hold [9] you hostage with foreign oil, they can dang [10] sure do the same thing with foreign food [11] sources.

[12] Now in reference to the DEIS, I [13] found the DEIS very difficult to read as [14] there was no index, a guide. The number [15] pages of the Executive Summary is misleading [16] and there is no mention of the five [17] additional volumes that were then numbered B [18] and C forvarious volumes. The problems go [19] on and on as far as understanding it, and I [20] think that there certainly needs to be [21] additional time to get through it so we can [22] comment accurately.

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[1] On the content of the draft, it's [2] flawed a number of ways. There's blatant [3] disregard for the impacts on people. In [4] Volume III-B, page 4.4 to 50, if the visitor [5] has not previously visited the area they're [6] unfamiliar with the landscape and may not [7] recognize that their view is impaired. In [8] other words, if they had not been there [9] before, they would not realize that the views [10] of Badlands Park were hidden in the pollution [11] of the coal train. So I guess what they [12] don't know doesn't hurt them, right?

[13] The impacts to the business of [14] ranching and farming have not been included [15] in the DEIS. They are merely page 4.4 [16] through 11. There is no. Where are the [17] charts and graphs of cost in man-hours to [18] move livestock and feed across the rail line? [19] Where's the chart showing the comparisons of [20] the man-hours needed to watch for fire along [21] the rail line versus fire from natural [22] causes? There are two lengthy sections of

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[1] rail line already built in the last 25 years [2] in this area that seem a natural place to [3] study these impacts.

[4] In addition, the DEIS statement on [5] page 4.4-11, that the primary impact [6] resources will be the direct loss of forage [7] area through its conversion to railroad [8] during construction. This is absurd. There [9] is so much more impact. Where is the expert [10] opinion this came from?

Most landowners [11] have repeatedly written that the biggest [12] impact is the division of their business. [13] The Landowner Advisory Committee and the land [14] use litigation policy are touted in the [15] Executive Summary and in Volume IV as the [16] mitigation landowners. The Advisory [17] Board does not represent me. The land use [18] mitigation policy has not been shown to the [19] majority of landowners, only to the ones who [20] agreed to cooperate with the DM&E from the [21] very beginning. This is not "mitigation" by [22] meaning of the word.

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[1] In Volume VI, Appendix A, pages 41, [2] the STB accepts the applicant's view that the [3] will increase from 2002 to 2007. The [4] success of this project hinges on increased [5]. However, the DEIS in several places, [6] Volume I, pages 1 through 20, and Volume III, [7] pages 4.4 to 133, state that transportation [8] costs will be reduced by the increased [9] competition offered by DM&E. In comments [10] submitted at the Douglas meeting just the [11] other night, Mary Loomis (?), the director of [12] the Wyoming Mining Association stated that [13] when the Union Pacific and the Chicago [14] Northwestern railroads did a second line, [15] freight rates dropped 30 percent. We assume [16] that the third railroad would result in [17] similarly lowered rates which would doom the [18] success of the project.

[19] There are a huge amount of errors [20] in the DEIS. Highways and county roads are [21] mislabeled. In Appendix 8, there's no [22] mention of the crossing of Interstate

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[1] Highway 9 near Wall, South Dakota. There's [2] presently a separating that's not [3] shown in any of the charts in this. It [4] doesn't — in the STB by Shieffer, he [5] listed Exhibit A, I-90 is listed as a [6] proposed grade crossing and then it doesn't [7] appear in the DEIS. There's a number of [8] errors in the of the safety along [9] Alternative D. What is a passive device? Is [10] considered in the same category as the [11] preparation? There are 17 crops listed [12] for Weston County and I know that 10 of them [13] are incorrect. Two of them were for not [14] researched by others. Is this any indication [15] of the quality of the research done, 59 [16] percent of the information is incorrect? How [17] can you go and officials make correct [18] decisions with flawed information?

[19] The CD-ROM version of the Draft EIS [20] is useless. Is that the time? The U.S. Army [21] Corps of Engineers' document was unavailable. [22] It's 90 miles away. I

would like to request

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[1] that the comment period for both the 404 and [2] the DEIS be extended at least 180 days and [3] some revisions be done to the Draft EIS. [4] Thank you.

[5] **BONNIE**: Thank you. Don Higgins? [6] He was just here. Don?

[7] **SPEAKER**: He's right here.

[8] BONNIE: Don? set up [9] MR. HIG-GINS: I'm coming, I'm just [10] so busy getting my around here. But I [11] know it's been a quite a day with this storm, [12] so but I did get my on. It's good [13] to see you people in Newcastle. So I'm going [14] to keep as much as we do today. Okay, [15] here's my statement expand upon it. [16] I've been all over, on foot and [17] road and airplane, along most of the 280 [18] miles of the construction to Wall, South [19] Dakota, and the coal mines. My opinion is [20] that Alternative C has no place for coal [21] trains. The Cheyenne River Valley in South [22] Dakota and Wyoming is no place for a

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[1] railroad. The current use of this grassland [2] is a working landscape producing agricultural [3] commodities, open space, and recreational [4] opportunities on public lands is the [5] preferred use. It is not only [6] destination-specific, a vacation opportunity [7] to breathe and see the clean air over our [8] at Badlands and . In no way can air 191 pollution from DM&E's old model locomotives [10] operating 6 miles to Badlands National [11] Park be mitigated. Diesel exhaust from [12] numerous moving or idling trains, as [13] addressed by the Clean Air Act, have [14] cumulative effects. The DEIS fails to [15] adequately address this matter. Even with an [16] air quality team looking at all the effects, [17] the absence of complete analysis of air [18] quality in the DEIS suggests a need for a [19] revised Draft EIS. So let's stop the process [20] after the Rochester hearing and go back to [21] the drawing board. South Dakota and [22] Wyoming, Alternative C the mandates are clear

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[1] in the Clean Water Act are not adequately [2] addressed to prevent impairment of already [3] impaired reaches of the Cheyenne River and [4] its tributaries. Again, proximal and [5] cumulative effects have not been sufficiently [6] considered by the STB and the Corps of [7] Engineers, nor by the states, in regard to [8] water quality in this Draft EIS. This, [9] again, suggests to me DEIS. My [10] suggestion is that Alternative A action [11] of the DM&E permit is the only reasonable [12] option for the STB.

[13] Here in Wyoming, the off-rail [14] impacts of DM&E's proposal are local, [15] regional, current, and cumulative as will be [16] obvious to residents and visitors to [17] Northeast Wyoming. Heavy-haul coal trains [18] create noise, air pollution, train wrecks, [19] fires without necessarily paying the costs [20] and not necessarily benefitting anyone. [21] I examined the Draft EIS and found [22] it inadequate, incomplete, inaccurate maps,

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[1] confusing, and applicant-driven. I repeat [2] the applicant-driven because DM&E's [3] unsubstantiated assertions are based on [4] proprietary information and are not balanced [5] or verifiable scientific information. The [6] entire section on economic analysis is [7] inadequate being based on fuzzy math left [8] over from the transportation phase of 1998. [9] Only document, a technical report from [10] the U.S. Forest Service out of BLM, including [11] information from .Only this volume is [12] balanced and DM&E are not present in the [13] tech report.

[14] So it is a no-build . It's a [15] no-build and a no-action, no permit expedient [16] decision will send a message to an upstart [17] railroad and to investors, national and [18] offshore, that this part of Wyoming, with the [19] big old spaces and private and public lands, [20] is a national treasure not for sale, [21] regardless of DM&E's promises for mitigation.

[22] BONNIE: One minute left.

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[1] MR. HIGGINS: This working [2] landscape will continue to function with the [3].DM&E expansion is not an answer to [4] national transportation .DM&E coal [5] trains are private, for-profit, shortsighted [6], not in the national interest, and [7] actually destructive to the working landscape [8] of Northeastern Wyoming with no benefit to [9] local citizens and landowners. The cost of [10] the environmental impacts of this third [11] carrier are too high and far outweigh [12] that as prescribed by federal law. In [13] conclusion, no-build and Alternative A [14] is a positive decision to deny the permit as [15] stated by the no-action preference of the [16] U.S. Forest Service, one of the stewards of [17] this part of the nation. By extending the [18] comment period by 180 days of both the DEIS [19] and and by doing a second DEIS, the STB [20] and the Corps of Engineers can show some [21] leadership .Alternative A is a [22] responsible, dependable alternative to not

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ject. [2] Think of the no-build as a decision to save [3] time, money, energy, and STB Wyoming. [4] Use that time, energy, and money to [5] participate in a real energy issue, plan [6] for America. Otherwise, we will see you in [7] court for years and years on accountability [8] will still rest the DM&E as an [9] untrustworthy, bad neighbor pursuing a [10] destructive project not in anyone's interest. [11] Thank you.

[12] BONNIE: Thank you. Glenn Hanson?

[13] MR. HANSON: I unemployed. [14] First, I do want to thank you for giving us [15] this opportunity and became friends with [16] the BLM and the Forest Service. But the BLM [17] out here in Wyoming the land they own is [18] the — the land that they control is land [19] homesteaders didn't want. It's just on [20] most of it. Nobody bothered them. And the [21] Forest Service, most of the land they have [22] down in that area is land that nobody can

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[1] make a living on, so they sold it back to the [2] government for \$2 an acre. Now said the [3] EIS is on private land, you know, there's a [4] lot of stipulations on BLM and the Forest [5] land, but nothing on private land. And [6] particular be sure to consider all [7] the thousands of people in the cities, [8] Minnesota, South Dakota, that are against [9] this. I mean, all the Ronald Reagan and [10] everything has . opposition [11] huge. I mean, relatively few people that [12] want .

[13] **BONNIE:** Okay, thank you. The next [14] speaker is Rhonda Stearns.

[15] MS. STEARNS: I would also say [16] thanks for the opportunity to express an [17] opinion here today. I have not had an [18] opportunity to look at the impact statement. [19] I have learned a lot listening here today. I [20] would strictly like to join Ann Wehri in [21] saying that I take exception to the Mayor's [22] statements that most of the people in the

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[1] Newcastle community support the railroad [2] because I've certainly lived here all my life [3] and I do not prefer the railroad. I mean, I [4] would support the no-action. I would also [5] support a lengthy extension of time for [6] ranchers and people who will be impacted by [7] this to have more time to understand what [8] this impact statement says, what it does not [9] say. And the things that are not clarified, [10] I certainly hope that you folks will have the [11] responsibility of sitting on this panel [12] insight into many of the things that are [13] wrong with this paper today.

[14] I would like to say that my family [15] for several generations on both sides, has

[16] occupied this land. The first explorers that [17] came out here said that this was the great [18] American desert and would never amount to [19] anything. came into the state of [20] Wyoming in the 1800s and proved to the world [21] that cattle can utilize one of the great [22] renewable assets that this world has, which

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[1] is grass and . Wyoming is not much of a [2] party country. Never has been; never will [3] be. But we've seen a lot of people on [4] and the grass that grows here naturally.

[5] I think back to . [6] watershed, the water rights, have been [7] established since the first — early '80s. [8] He came back, as people have, because [9] and you don't have much . What you do [10] have is extremely valuable. I would say that [11] it's a lot more valuable than any other — 1121 than a big farming area where everybody is [13] fertilizing everything irrigation. If [14] you have a flood you every year and [15] something comes along and changes the [16] watershed that's been there for 100,000 years [17] and you lose that ,I think the value of [18] that needs to be figured on a pro rated basis [19] as just exactly how much it's getting from [20] contributors to the success of your [21] operation.

[22] Furthermore, I think that our

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[1] livestock have lived on this land forever. [2] They have learned to range on this land. [3] They've learned the, everybody's [4] gathered onto the . They know how they [5] move from pasture to pasture in time. My [6] husband I do ranch and we do day work [7] for people all over Weston County and [8] Niobrara County on into Converse County and [9] some over into South Dakota. And you (10) discover that if you change the routine of [11] livestock, you lose hours and hours, and [12] everybody on the street downtown figures [13] their time, the value of their time by the [14] hours that they spend in a day and what they [15] get accomplished. And it's going to take [16] about five times as long to accomplish one [17] task than it should normally take you because [18] the railroad has to come through and disturb [19] the terrain and disturb the natural [20] tendencies of your livestock, the learned [21] rhythms, that are so natural to this land. I [22] think those things are probably not being

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[1] considered. And I also think, as Mr. Tubbs [2] said, there are many, many people who are [3] going to be affected by the railroad even [4] though their land

does not lie in the [5] right-of-way. Yes, perhaps they're going to [6] pay those people for right-of-way, perhaps [7] they're going to pay those people for the [8] ground that they disturb, but the people who [9] lie next to that and close to that or are [10] going to be impacted by all these other [11] factors are not going to be .And I [12] think that this is something that —

[13] **BONNIE**: One minute.

[14] MS. STEARNS: All these voices that [15] are being raised should be considered. You [16] know, area where there are . Many [17] of these archeological things are something [18] that we simply cannot replace; they're [19] priceless. This is a national treasure. The [20] quality of our air, the lack of sound [21] pollution that we now is priceless and [22] we need to really consider because that's not

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[1] a renewable resource, it's not something we [2] can bring back. I remember the first time I [3] ever saw smog hanging over Salt Lake City. I [4] remember the first time I saw smog hanging [5] over Albuquerque. I never thought that would [6] happen, but it has happened and it can happen [7] here. And I would certainly recommend that [8] you would accept the no-build and that we [9] would definitely give these people more time. [10] Thank you very much.

[11] BONNIE: Thank you. We had [12] formally we do want to encourage you to [13] submit written comments, certainly by the [14] January 5th deadline. If you would like to [15] submit a written comment today on that sheet, [16] that would be great. We do have a Web site [17] online way to contact us the [18] information up front and all participating [19] board. And most importantly, we really [20] want to thank you for making the comments [21] today and in this weather. We had [22] almost the entire list show up so we can

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[1] know that you all here and we appreciate [2] that.

[3] Thank you very much and have a nice [4] evening. We will be back here again at 6:00 [5] o'clock. We again making comments. [6] Thank you.

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[1] EVENING SESSION

[2] (6:00 p.m.)

[3] **BONNIE:** Like to get started here. [4] We've got about a third of presentations [5] will and it will totally be your [6] comment time.

[7] The purpose of tonight's meeting is [8] to describe the agency in reviewing the [9] proposed DM&E construction, rail construction [10] project. Secondly, it's to

provide an [11] overview of the project. Third is to [12] describe the preliminary results of the [13] environmental review. And finally and most [14] importantly, we're here to receive your, [15] your public comments. And I would like to [16] say on the Draft EIS -

[17] **SPEAKER:** At the [18] Transportation Board, I know a number of you [19] were here this afternoon, I'm pleased that [20] you decided to come back this evening, as [21] well. And please, be patient with us because [22] you're going to hear the same information

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[1] that you heard earlier. Thank you.

[2] SPEAKER: Some of the unique [3] characteristics just some of the ones [4] we'll highlight. We're to Buffalo Gap [5] national grassland, various tribal and Native [6] American concerns, again ranchers and farming [7] along existing live areas. The central [8] impact various communities located [9] within the five area, particularly those [10] along the line and near the new construction. [11] And then the potential impact that could [12] result due to DM&E's necessity to either [13] reconstruct its existing bridge over the [14] Missouri River or to construct a new bridge [15] at that location.

[16] In Minnesota, the existing DM&E [17] line will be reconstructed. There would be [18] new construction or there was proposed new [19] construction in the communities of Mankato, [20] Owatonna -

[21] SPEAKER: we have another [22] representative from one other federal agency

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[1] in the audience tonight. Jim Berkley from [2] the U.S. EPA is with us. EPA's role in this [3] project will be to review and rate the Draft [4] Environmental Impact Statement as well as [5] DM&E's proposal, and EPA will also be [6] reviewing the 404 permit application. Jim, [7] would you mind?

[8] Okay, let me just finish some of [9] the logistics around the time against [10] submitting your comments. All comments we [11] are receiving at this meetingtonight. [12] Written comments, there-'s a comment sheet, a [13] comment sheet that you can fill out [14] tonight and drop it in the box or, as we [15] mentioned before, you can send them in [16] writing by January 5th or any time between [17] now and then. You also — the agency will [18] respond to the comments in the Final [19] Environmental Impact Statement. You will see [20] formal responses to the comments that you [21] submit in

[22] What we'd like to see your written

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[1] comments on are things. First, the [2] Draft Environmental Impact and keep your [3] comments to anywhere between three and five [4] minutes. I'll tell you when you have a [5] minute and then you'll hear the little beeper [6] go off when you five minutes. Thank [7] you.

[8] SPEAKER: I think are probably [9] just about all being used, Steve.

[10] SPEAKER: Mike.

[11] **SPEAKER:** Can you use the mike?

[12] SPEAKER: Don't worry about the [13] switch.

[14] SPEAKER: Is it on?

[15] SPEAKER: Yes, sir.

[16] SPEAKER: Trythis again. I [17] don't -I guess I can't say exactly what it [18] was or when this Miss Nancy Hodges (?) when [19] she called to visit me about doing a — the [20] deal 3.3 miles of our ranch. We set up [21] an appointment to get started and she later [22] called and changed the appointment. I went

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[1] ahead and I changed it and there was -I [2] just about, it was about a week [3] later and she never showed up.

[4] A little bit later that month, a [5] guy by the name of Paul-somebody called and [6] he kind of asked what was going on with EIS [7] and we told him that we really didn'tknow,[8] that Nancy was supposed to be coming out. He [9] informed my wife that she'd unexpectedly left [10] on a vacation to England and he would set up [11] a time to come out. That's the last I ever [12] heard from him.

[13] Although I requested an EIS be done [14] on my place, there has never been one done. [15] I have concerns over dinosaur fossils in [16] these sites; also endangered and threatened [17] plants and animals. Numerous things, I feel, [18] have been overlooked in this EIS and the [19] facts all point to, as I would say, being [20] very poorly done and incomplete in an unfair [21] way being made on ridiculously [22] incomplete information. It's only — has

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11 only been done on just a portion of the [2] route, also. A lot more studying needs to be [3] done on the water wells that are planned for [4] use in construction. I would like to know [5] who says their water table is going to come [6] back.

[7] I think a lot of work needs to be [8] done on air quality and extra traffic, that [9] they're going to have to — that they plan to [10] service our existing customers. I think that [11] we all need air quality and we need models [12] for people. We value our clean air and [13] there are laws in place to protect it, and [14] you must follow them and consider the [15] emissions.

[16] Also, I would like to let you know [17] that the advisory committee that was set up [18] Shieffer has not and has never has [19] not ever been authorized to speak for me. [20] They do not share the same opinions. I [21] requested to be on the board at the start. I [22] feel that I was never considered to be part

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[1] of the process. Not a single one has ever [2] contacted me about this whole thing; not a [3] single one.

[4] I think that this whole EIS needs [5] to be struck. I think that we should start [6] fresh and proceed according to the law set [7] out for the qualified people. And for [8] those of you as well as others that I reserve [9] the right to include at a later date, I [10] request an extension of the comment period [11] for at least six months. That's my view.

[12] SPEAKER: Thank you very much. [13] Okay, our second speaker is Joe

[14] MR. SIMMONS: Is this one on? My [15] name is Joe Simmons. I'm a rancher on the [16] proposed line. We're opposed to the building [17] of the DM&E proposed new railway an [18] unnecessary railroad would cross [19] approximately 2 miles of our land and have a [20] serious adverse effect on our ranching [21] business. Noise will disturb the wildlife, [22] as well as the cattle, and noxious air

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[1] pollution from these trains will [2] increase our already existing levels from [3] the — our other railroads. The spread of [4] coal dust and diesel soot in the watersheds, [5] which are not currently being polluted by [6] coal trains, will be damaging to the [7] environment. Fire's a concern. There would [8] be fires from these trains. And if it's [9] built in undisturbed areas, well, there are [10] not natural firebreaks there, such as [11] highways, that help contain these fires. [12] One of the biggest losses due to [13] the railroad is the water along some of our [14] pasture. The proposed route cuts off the [15] Black Thunder and Little Thunder creeks from [16] our pastures and that takes away the water [17] from the rest of the pasture. The loss of [18] livestock due to the railroad affects our [19] livelihood. [20] I bring up all these things even [21]

though some of them can supposedly be dealt [22] with through negotiations. I feel

that under

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[1] current law many of these losses which occur [2] because of the proposed new railroad will be [3] inadequately compensated for. Therefore, we [4] feel it's wrong for ranchers and the private [5] enterprise or even government to help fund [6] the private railroad that is being proposed [7] for a profitable venture.

[8] We feel that because there are [9] other rail lines in the Powder River coal [10] mines, the proposed railroad is a luxury that [11] is unnecessary. The price for tearing up now [12] undisturbed scenic land will cost future [13] generations for as long as the railroad [14] exists. Thank you.

[15] BONNIE: Thank you. Okay, our next

[16] speaker is Lou Ann Borg-ee-all-ee?

[17] **SPEAKER:** Bor-jelly. [18] **BONNIE:** Borgialli.

[19] SPEAKER: Lou Ann you want to [20] read them? Shall I read them?

[21] SPEAKER: Yeah.

[22] SPEAKER: Lou Ann was unable to

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[1] come tonight because of the weather [2] conditions in her area. She's from the [3] Wright (?) area, although interestingly [4] enough her address is Newcastle, Wyoming, but [5] she lives much closer to Wright. Here's what [6] she wrote:

[7] It is very hard for me to make it [8] clear comment on the draft. I have only had [9] the draft for 30 days. As you know, it's a [10] lengthy document, and I have been only able [11] to get through a little bit of it. I feel [12] that we should be given an additional 180 [13] days to review it.

[14] From what I've been able to read, [15] there are three areas of concerns that I [16] have: Exactly where the railroad is going, [17] the highway crossings, the noise issue, and [18] the air quality. When I looked at the maps [19] that were available to me, I found that there [20] will be four grade crossings between my [21] house and the Black Thunder line. That's [22] only a nine-mile distance. My concern is in

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[1] the fact that I have a child that will have [2] to ride a bus or drive herself to and from [3] school. The have made overpasses [4] on 450. Why doesn't the DM&E have to do the [5] same?

[6] When I saw the maps during the [7] scoping, I was under the assumption that the [8] railroad would go on the north side of [9] Highway 450; now it's on the south side. I'm [10] not sure from the maps just where it will be [11] in relation to my house. Why can't we be [12] given exact maps of where it will go?

[13] Why is the noise more of a concern [14] for the people in town than those of us who [15] live out of? Isn't our right to peace [16] and quiet as important as those

that live in [17] town? I have heard that in Arizona, a [18] railroad was trying to make a new route and [19] they were told that they would have to put up [20] sound barriers along the route. Will DM&E [21] have to do the same? Will we make them put [22] them up everywhere?

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[1] My main concern is for the air [2] quality. We are right now having problems in [3] my area with the mines blasting and producing [4] orange clouds that have been labeled lethal [5] by the EPA. From what I've been able to read [6] there haven't been any studies into the NOx [7] in my area. Why not? Were there studies [8] done on what the combination of the Two Elks [9] power plant will have in relation to the [10] railroad? If so, what are they?

[11] We know now that the train's just [12] sitting at center have increased their [13] NOx to a warning level. Will that be any [14] different for us by the yard that DM&E has [15] planned? From what I can see, the yard [16] on 450 is one of the lowest spots on the [17] route and that all trains will have a pull [18] going east and west. With that our NOx will [19] increase even more. What are the studies [20] that have been done on that? Where are they [21] so I can look at them? The only other place [22] in Wyoming that has a NOx problem is at Bill

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[1] (?), Wyoming, right beside the yard. [2] With everything else we have to contend with, [3] is having a yard on 450 really a good idea?

[4] I do not feel that the railroad [5] should be allowed to come over new ground at [6] all. Why is it better to go on existing [7] lines in some places and not in others? Why [8] is our area, even though less populated, less [9] valuable than one with more population? Why, [10] just because we have less people, should we [11] have to live with all the destruction the [12] railroad will make?

[13] Now I'd like to talk on behalf of [14] my neighbors, Dan and Joyce Tracy (?). They [15] are right now in the hospital with their [16] daughter not sure of how much longer she has [17] and unable to be here. Their ranch will be [18] split into several different sections. The [19] tracks are going to cut the water supply off [20] for a big part of their ranch. They're very [21] concerned with what this project will do to [22] their water. What has been done to study the

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[1] change of the Little Thunder Creek? Lou Ann [2] Borgialli.

[3] **SPEAKER:** Thank you. Our next [4] speaker is Rick Wehri.

[5] MR. WEHRI: My name's Rick Wehri. [6] ranch just across line. And all my [7] comments, although I've got a lot on [8] document, just the first thing that [9] struck me about the document talk about [10] was the fact that this Environmental Impact [11] Statement reads more like an editorial [12] than it does the unbiased analysis.

[13] On Section 1502, on the shall [14] not commit resources prejudicing selection of [15] alternatives before making a final decision. [16] And it also says the Environmental Impact [17] Statement shall serve as the means of [18] assessing the environmental impact of [19] proposed agency actions rather than [20] justifying decisions already made.

[21] Reading this I think that the EIS [22] was written with a predetermined judgment

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[1] that they were going to try and prove that [2] the railroad could be built. And then [3] reading through I can see several statements [4] that lead me to believe that. On Table 5.1 [5] of the EIS, phrases they used in here that [6] indicate to me a slight bias. One place it [7] says: Ingestation from fuel and lubricants [8] in the unlikely event of an accident . [9] DM&E has the worst safety record in — of all [10] the railroads in that state. Why are they [11]?, so there should be some effects.

[12] It says reduced access an [13] inconvenience to environmental ranchers. [14] This is a livestock woman. Whenever they [15] talk about an effect that's inconvenience or [16] a nuisance, it's not a problem, it's just a [17] simple inconvenience like standing in line at [18] Kmart. It's not an inconvenience. It says: [19] Potential damages to one house located [20] between 100 and 200 feet from the proposed [21] line, and it also goes on to state that these [22] structures could experience minor damages.

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[1] But the minor damage is determined as crack [2] in the foundations, breaking of items along [3] the tables and walls. And it also states [4] that this would be an inconvenience and [5] annoyance to someone. A crack in the [6] foundation is a minor flaw? I think that's [7] quite major.

[8] It says fencing may impede seasonal [9] migration. May impede? You got a fence on [10] two sides of the railroad track and that [11] might impede migration? It also says then we [12] go over 100 railroad tracks. These are [13] adjectives. This is supposed to be an [14] unbiased analysis and yet we're using all [15] these things that say over 900 construction [16] jobs, we got high-paying railroad jobs, those

[17] property values may increase in areas [18] suitable for commercial development. There's [19] no data for this; it just says it.

[20] No business industries are located [21] in close proximity to the proposed rail [22] corridor. What are all the ranches and

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[1] farms? Are these not businesses? It says [2] the only measurable impact on big game is the [3] amount of habitat lost to the conversion of [4] the rail line. The only impact was the loss [5] of this little bit of land. Is that not [6] misleading?

[7] One statement I particularly like [8] was talking about fires. It says: However, [9] sometimes, fires to be escaping, and [10] under the right conditions and if these fires [11] land in an area with fuel, a source of dry [12] grass, they can ignite fires. Isn't that [13] quite a qualified runaround statement? [14] If — it sounds like to me it's a very slim [15] chance that we have fire along the route. It [16] happens all the time. This makes it sound [17] like it hardly could ever happen, and if [18] there is a fire then the mitigation says the [19] shall develop an adequate plan for fire [20] prevention. What is an adequate plan for [21] fire prevention? What does that mean? It's [22] up to his discretion to do what he wants.

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[1] SPEAKER: One minute.

[2] MR. WEHRI: One minute? Okay, [3] I'll—I've got a lot more. I would also — [4] I also think that they are using scare [5] tactics to try to talk you into using the [6] DM&E. It says that actual alternative [7] would have serious environmental [8] consequences. It says the hardships, the [9] the ag communities, and all these [10] things, but none of these are substantiated. [11] They're just quoting from DM&E or preaching [12] for the DM&E that these alternative have [13] all these environmental constants, yet it [14] doesn't talk about any of them doesn't [15] characterize them.

[16] Therefore, I think that this Draft [17] EIS needs to be thrown out based on the fact [18] that it was prejudiced in the selection of [19] alternative before making their final [20] decision. It is justified and predetermined [21] decisions through the use of Environmental [22] Impact Statement and throw it out and

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[1] start new with an unbiased council. Thank [2] you.

[3] **SPEAKER:** Thank you, Rick. I do [4] want to remind we've got about three [5] more signed up to speak, so if you would [6] like to speak, please do. Go up the front [7] there and let Judy know so we

can add you to [8] the list.

[9] Okay, our next speaker is Maxine [10] Ripley. I'm sorry, Maxine.

[11] MS. RIPLEY:

[12] SPEAKER: Okay.

[13] MS. RIPLEY: Because I didn't get [14] her

[15] **SPEAKER:** Okay, because the police [16] told us . right?

[17] MS. RIPLEY:

[18] **SPEAKER:** Okay. And then our next [19] speaker is Keith Anderson.

[20] MR. ANDERSON: Thank you. I'm a [21] landowner. I operate a ranch south of [22] the Wyoming line.

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[1] I'd like to start with some general [2] comments, first directed toward the Corps of [3] Engineers representative. I guess I object [4] to the fact that this proposed 404 permit is [5] not readily available for public inspection.

[6] In my specific instance, the [7] closest complete document I believe is in the [8] Rapid City Library. That's 100 miles distant [9] from me, and it's simply not practical for me [10] to go to Rapid City to a library and do an [11] adequate review of that document . And [12] would request that the Corps of Engineers [13] make that document readily available to [14] interested landowners at the very least and [15] provide [16] meaningful comments.

[17] What struck me reading the [18] Environmental Impact Statement, it was [19] written with a total lack of cites listing [20] the investigations and appeared to have been [21] written largely in an office. It relied [22] heavily on representations by the applicant

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[1] and by consultants obtained by the applicant [2] and by industry organizations with a vested [3] interest in the outcome.

[4] The entire discussion of the [5] nobuild Alternative A talks about a lot of [6] negative consequences of the no-build. [7] Again, that seems to be taken directly from [8] the applicant's promotional literature. And [9] it is highly speculative when you talk about [10] economic impacts, safety impacts, management [11] impacts, all those kinds of things that you [12] really have no way of predicting. And I [13] think that that kind of speculative [14] literature has no place in what's intended to [15] be a decision document. [16] This EIS attempts to demonstrate [17] that there's a need for additional rail [18] capacity out of the Powder River Basin. [19] Again, that's based — appears to be based [20] largely on representations made by the [21] applicant. The only thing that I could find [22] that was — comes close to being an unbiased

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[1] analysis was the in Section 5.2.3, paid [2] for by BNUP (?). I think they have correctly [3] identified that the bottleneck in moving coal [4] out of the Powder River Basin is in terms of [5] loading facilities. And I think if you had [6] spent some time talking with you'd find [7] that to be the case. The entire discussion [8] on air quality were to basically just dismiss [9] coal dust emissions for the train. It's [10] inadequate suggested because nobody has [11] complained that there's not a problem. And [12] the scoping area I indicated at that [13] time that we or I had the opportunity to [14] serve as chief engineer on a project where, [15] among other things, we did baseline [16] environmental monitoring for an environmental [17] impact statement written by Nancy Dallacory [18] (?). As part of that, system of [19] baseline air quality monitoring, we had one [20] ESD (?) monitor about 200 meters from the BN [21] track, certain atmospheric conditions,[22] fugitive coal dust from the BN trains would

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[1] blind single train. Again, with [2] the — what is known under Representative [3] Kramer (?), Representative Dare (?) that [4] indicated, under certain conditions, they [5] would look back at the train and it was just [6] a fog of dust. It's not on every train, but [7] again, you can't just summarily dismiss it, [8] not only with regard to visual impact on air [9] quality, I think you have to discuss [10] potential health impacts.

[11] I realize that there are —[12] probably are not specific epidemiological [13] studies that relate to congestion and low [14] concentrations of coal dust, but I would [15] suggest what you need to do is what they've [16] done with other contaminants and assume a [17] straight line in relationship between health [18] impacts and ingestion with the contaminant. [19] Most notably that's done. And I think [20] that that discussion, particularly where the [21] road goes through so many populated areas [22] needs to be discussed.

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[1] Just very quickly, the discussion [2] with regard to derailments being unlikely, [3] again, I think that's entirely inadequate. [4] We have records from other railroads and [5] we all of us here can remember on the [6] B&N . And I think that you need to make [7] some kind of prediction of derailments. It [8] also indicates that the small quantities of

[9] fuel and lubricants. I would point out to [10] you that the DM&E locomotive likely to be [11] used on this project has a fuel capacity of [12] 6,000 gallons. So with three units, you've [13] got a fuel capacity about 18,000 gallons. [14] And I don't know under any definition that [15] that would be considered to be spill.

[16] Finally, with relation to surface [17] quality impacts — surface water quality [18] impacts, the state of South Dakota has [19] identified the majority of the Cheyenne River [20] in the area under consideration . And [21] depending on what EPA ultimately does with [22] , the impacts, the are not

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- [1] primarily and this document indicates [2] that stretch of the operation will have [3] significant impacts on and the [4] watershed. And I think that's a significant [5] impact .Thank you.
- [6] **SPEAKER**: Thank you. Anna Simmons?
- [7] MS, SIMMONS: To the chairman and [8] the board and all present, this railroad –
- [9] **SPEAKER:** Anna, would you come up a [10] little closer to the mike?
- [11] MS. SIMMONS: To the chairman and [12] board and present, this railroad [13] Proposal 3-A and every day, 365 days a year, [14] pain in our side, like a sack of rocks [15] attached to our backs. The cost of losing [16] livestock in storms, water, fighting [17] prove the railroad has caused damage and [18] deaths and range fires, trying to use the [19] crossing with trains on the tracks most of [20] the time.
- [21] There is noise pollution and dust [22] flying off the trains, settling on the range.

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- [1] Horses are afraid of these noisy, smelly [2] trains, too. Dust from the coal is not [3] healthy. Could the Surface Transportation [4] Board get a study done on how healthy it is [5] to have the dust to breathe and eat the soot [6] on the grass for wildlife and domestic [7] animals?
- [8] Emissions from the diesel [9] locomotives also is known to cause cancer, 1101 We do not need another dirty, unhealthy [11] environment in our county. DM&E is a [12] private, I mean, private business. DM&E is [13] threatening to pay only onefourth to [14] one-twelfth the cost of any bypasses around [15] cities to force the cities and rural [16] landowners to agree to what DM&E wants: To [17] not the rest of our cities and towns out [18] in public. The example given is Pierre, [19] South Dakota, \$1 million cost. But the [20] railroad would only pay \$12 million and the [21] DM&E railroad is causing cost. What [22] else and where else is DM&E going to shove

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[1] costs it is creating to landowners?

- [2] Of the jobs the railroad has [3] proposed, it will bring in 1,176 jobs quoted [4] in the paper. 1,117 will be in South Dakota. [5] That leaves 59 jobs for Weston County, [6] Niobrara County, and Campbell County to [7] share. Is that construction only or [8] permanent jobs?
- [9] Vern (?) and I've worked to drive [10] our pickups and trucks and ride our horses, [11] drive cattle, fix fence, enjoy open spaces [12] our private own business. We enjoy the [13] wildlife in this area of Weston County where [14] the railroad is proposing to cross. Our land [15] is in better shape now than 100 years ago. [16] There is water and grass distributed [17] everywhere. Vern can remember when his dad [18] first seen the first deer in its open range [19] area of Weston County. New water development [20] has increased wildlife presence, along with [21] a fine place to live and raise our [22] children and grandchildren. I have typed and

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- [1] copied articles of where I got my facts from [2] and we agree with the comments we've received [3] over our e-mail service. I can give you [4] copies of that and I won't repeat it here.
- [5] Another question: How soon will dirty coal [6] be out of popularity for generating [7] electricity and solar sun and natural gas [8] take its place? We need to use clean energy [9] whenever we can. We had the Burlington [10] Northern Santa Fe Railroad and the —
- [11] SPEAKER: One minute.
- [12] MS. SIMMONS: Union Pacific. [13] That is on the northern, eastern, western, [14] and southern boundary of Weston County. We [15] do not need a duplication of services down [16] the middle of our county. DM&E should foot [17] all costs if it's agreed. There's a concern [18] of coal dust flying off the trains leaving [19] for Aspen. We have seen it firsthand. You [20] can see a coal train coming for miles because [21] of the black dust flying off in the air. The [22] further the coal full train travels, the

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- [1] dustier the coal becomes. Remember the coal [2] miners in Kentucky and . Didn't they [3] develop black lung disease from working in [4] the coal mines? Do we who live along a coal [5] route suffer the same future? Thank you.
- [6] **SPEAKER:** Thank you. Okay. Don [7] Higgins?
- [8] MR. HIGGINS: a second chance [9] to speak today. I mean, I power of [10] storm for this evening's meeting. I've been [11]

listening carefully again because every time [12] Ihear a new speaker, Ihear more issues [13] regarding DM&E and regarding problems with [14] the EIS and I'm just wonderfully privileged [15] to hear all these new objections. I hope the [16] people up front are taking notes, and we are [17] just beginning this process, dialogue if you [18] will. We're very courteous and friendly at [19] this stage and we intend to remain that way [20] until we tell it to the judge.

[21] **BONNIE:** Thank you, Don. Okay, so [22] right now, I just want to make sure the folks

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- [1] who didn't get an opportunity to speak, [2] excuse me, or those folks who have had an [3] opportunity, right now would be the time. So [4] if anybody would like an additional 3 to 5 [5] minutes to speak, we just ask you to come up [6] and spell your name, and if you represent any [7] group, into the microphone so we can make [8] sure we capture it clearly. So are there [9] folks who haven't spoken at all? Did you [10] raise your hand, sir? Would you want to come [11] back up?
- [12] MR. ANDERSON: I have already [13] spoken. I would like some additional time, [14] though.
- [15] **BONNIE:** Some additional time? [16] Okay, that's fine. Come on up. Again, just [17] for the purposes of the transcript, if you [18] wouldn't mind just spelling saying your [19] name again, that'd be great.
- [20] MR. ANDERSON: I'm Keith Anderson. [21] I think your clock might be fast. (Laughter)
- [22] BONNIE: No, it's not.

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- [1] MR. ANDERSON: But I do get a [2] chance to —
- [3] BONNIE: It's not.
- [4] MR. ANDERSON: . It seems [5] pretty clear that there would be an access [6] road that would be along the track for the [7] purpose of crew changes and providing [8] maintenance for the track. Nowhere can I [9] find where that's discussed in the draft and [10] certainly there will be impacts on air [11] quality and surface water quality from that. [12] The other aspect with regard to derailments, [13] you enter into that discussion, you need to [14] talk about spilled coal and how that's going [15] to be dealt with, where that might be [16] disposed of.
- [17] A couple of other issues that might [18] discussed talks about emergency response [19] vehicles. Again, I specifically addressed [20] this during the scoping process. It was [21] submitted

with this document. My suggestion [22] was that — my understanding of what's

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[1] included in this document is that it's [2] proposed in there to be some type of [3] communication between the trains themselves [4] and the emergency response vehicles so that 151 if the train crossing is blocked they can 161 communicate with the emergency response [7] vehicles, then choose an alternate route. [8] That's fine if you're in Washington, D.C., [9] but throughout much of this area if a route [10] is blocked there simply is no other [11] reasonable access. And while we recognize [12] the intent of this project is to run things [13] along the track, those of us familiar with [14] train operations know that from time to time [15] they will be stopped. Sometimes they're [16] stopped across crossings and yet if a [17] emergencyvehicle is denied access it could [18] be a fatal consequence. My suggestion to you [19] during the scoping was that you review those [20] situations where a sole access or the only [21] access might be blocked by the train that you [22] make a requirement under mitigation that

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[1] there be an alternate access provided, for [2] example, through a drainage structure or [3] something. In other words, you could route [4] the emergency vehicle down alongside the [5] track on the access road drainage [6] structure. I think it might be in that [7] situation where the train route would be [8] could deny us access.

[9] The discussion on construction [10] workers, 4.4.16-1, seems to, I think, miss [11] the point entirely. Again, when you're [12] talking about a few hundred workers. Perhaps [13] in Washington, D.C., it's hard to make — see [14] how that's a significant impact. You look at [15] I call them, a few hundred workers has a [16] huge impact on emergency services [17] particularly, the police, and the court [18] system. I don't mean that to discourage [19] construction workers, but it's a fact of [20] life. That kind of activity has a huge [21] impact and there needs to be a consideration [22] mitigating that impact.

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[1] The discussion on taxes, that [2] somehow those taxes would magically be paid [3] for those costs, entirely misses the point. [4] There's a common sales taxes, taxes [5] are available from the counties, that's [6] not the case, sales tax goes directly to the [7] state with no local benefit. In terms of [8] property tax, over two years between the [9] time that the construction occurs before [10] those property taxes, so again, there's [11] no real mechanism to the effect to pay [12]

for the .And I would point out on this [13] that the Table 4.4-44 on property tax has [14] originally been taken directly from DM&E's [15] promotional literature. It overstated the [16] tax revenues under the laws that were in [17] place at that time. The law's been changed [18] for over a year, so that table is based on a [19] law that is no longer in existence.

[20] And also with regard to sales and [21] use taxes there's some indication that [22] construction sales tax revenues. In

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[1] reality on a project this size, those types [2] of materials are not going to be purchased [3] locally; they're going to be bid. You might [4] have some suppliers from Rapid City or even [5] as far away as Denver and they're simply not [6] going to go down to the local five and dime [7] for railroad or even diesel fuel [8] for that matter.

[9] BONNIE: One minute.

[10] MR. ANDERSON: I think that hits [11] some of the major points that I wanted to [12] bring up. Thanks for your time.

[13] **BONNIE:** Okay, Ron Allemoni. Ron, [14] I don't think you were here in the beginning. [15] I'll give you — you have about 5 minutes or [16] so. I'll tell you when you have a minute.

[17] MR. ALLEMAN: Ron Alleman, [18] A-L-L-E-M-A-N. I'm here working with [19] Santa Fe. I have a few comments to [20] make. And first off, I'll start with about [21] this taking from the Powder River [22] Burlington Northern Santa Fe. It's a company

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[1] in-house newspaper that's put out [2] September 2000. holds small town [3] meeting. B&SF (?) president and chief [4] operating officer to come in and coming [5] back division. absolutely hard [6] time of year and I will give you problems [7]. values and increase somewhat [8] with a mild winter and a cooler summer in 191 many part of the country, complication [10] has to do with the various styles most [11] certainly, although expects that without [12] power the near future. The coal cycle [13] time has been so bad, BNSF is overburdened [14] with coal . Additionally, when Union [15] Pacific recovered from their post-merger [16] service difficulties business back.

[17] He was asked questions by the [18] people in the audience or the regulars at [19] this town meeting financially set of [20] questions asked. Will we continue to invest [21] in the coal corridor? The answer was rose by [22] rose. In 2001, you will not see significant

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[1] expansion in the Powder River Basin.

[2] Investments in this area are a little ahead [3] of the . There is nothing as important [4] to BNSF as businesses in this area. More and [5] more predictions will dictate .

[6] I would love to have the problem of [7] trying to convince to put more money [8] into the Powder River Basin. Things [9] used to. Why are we not putting any [10] maintenance money out here? there have [11] been many capital available [12] surfacing and undercutting while was [13] serviced this year. There's over a million [14] dollars spent on maintenance on [15] tracks alone. That's questionable. The [16] weight of trains is off of the track is [17] to engineer Steve had cancer. We [18] asked that will continue. Past [19] experience with railroads as far as [20] and the

[21] I went up to the ranch and as [22] a roadmaster. Now I am the new ranch track

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[1] inspector ranch. I've been on both [2] sides of railroad and this is a [3] different side of things. Railroads are not [4] good neighbors.

[5] When I was confronted about selling [6] my property to DM&E, they came back with —[7] and my question was how about fixing the [8] fence? What happens if my cows 4 miles [9] up on track? What do you do? They didn't [10] know.I told them, put the cow where [11] you find it. It doesn't matter. There's a [12] brand on the side of the cow. In [13] Section 4, we have the where that cow [14] came from, then does not care. His main [15] job is to get the thing off the right of [16] way — so hopefully, it's because then [17] he might have to carry.

[18] SPEAKER: One minute.

[19] MR. ALLEMAN: I'm going to [20] emphasize. You have problem with a [21] fence, have you got someone to fix it, yeah, [22] we'll get someone out to fix it. They won't

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[1] fix it. They do fix it on their time. And [2] then they propose to pay you one and one-half [3] times the rate of labor, whatever the minimum [4] wage is. It doesn't say anything about your [5] vehicles, it doesn't say anything about your [6] material, all it says is that's what they [7] will pay you. Farmers won't fix for the [8] railroad, I have a contract. The railroad is [9] not a good neighbor.

[10] DM&E will not address what they [11] will do, how they will keep trespassers off. [12] They don't know and have no control over it. [13] Thank you.

[14] SPEAKER: Okay, Allen Slagle.

[15] MR. SLAGLE: Thank you for the time [16] to let me speak. I appreciate the [17]

opportunity. Do I need to spell my name for [18] you? Okay, it's —

[19] **BONNIE**: Yeah, S-l-a-g-l-e?

[20] MR. SLAGLE: That's correct.

[21] SPEAKER: And A-1-1-e-n?

[22] MR. SLAGLE: Correct. And I'm a

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[1] rancher here in the area. I have just a few [2] concerns. I haven't had time to really go [3] over the Draft EIS, but I guess some of the [4] concerns I have, I've been dealing a lot with [5] the Forest Service lately and grazing 161 horse. And the problem we're having with [7] them is the Forest Service doesn't want us to [8] put any fence in to divide up grazing land [9] because it inhibits migration of wildlife. [10] And I guess what I see is a railroad is going [11] to be even twice as bad or more for that kind [12] of migration of wildlife because we should [13] have two fences that are a lot more [14] substantial and more they even allow us [15] to build, plus you've got a set of railroad [16] tracks, if not more . I see that as a [17] major problem for wildlife migration.

[18] Another thing that you're looking [19] at, Forest Service was even proposing some [20] wilderness and areas in our area real [21] close to where the railroad would be going [22] through. And as I look at that, if they're

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[1] proposing these kind of areas here, you know, [2] we're one of the last few areas that's [3] actually got some pretty wide open spaces [4] without highways or railways. And we do have [5] wilderness area if we wanted it, but I [6] guess we prefer to have the same quiet, [7] uninterrupted atmosphere as the wilderness [8] area without actually having the limitations [9] on it because this way, we can actually allow [10] people to come in. We get people from the [11] East come out hunting. They're all amazed at [12] the silence and the quietness that we get out [13]. And I know just had a railroad [14] cut through there not too long ago. They no [15] longer have the quiet up there. The railroad [16] comes — the trains come through and at any [17] time of the day or night, you hear a train [18] rumbling through and the noise that it makes, [19] I guess. I think that is a concern. I mean, [20] we enjoy our silent areas out here and the [21] ability to invite people to come out and [22] enjoy it with

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[1] I guess probably a lot of the other [2] issues have been addressed. I know fire is a [3] big issue for us. This last summer was a big [4] one, a little extra dry. Railroads do

cause [5] fire.

[6] And another thing would be the [7] state. Just about time DM&E was proposing [8] this, there was a big deal on railroad [9] safety, accidents at railroad crossings. [10] look at DM&E's proposal here, most of [11] their road crossings are just a regular old [12] crossing, no separation between the train and [13] the vehicles crossing. And I guess, you [14] know, if we're going to build a new railroad, [15] let's build a safe one; let's have them put [16] split crossings at all major county roads and [17] highways and not have to worry about it when [18] they — UP did a . They closed a lot of [19] the road crossings that were going across [20] some of railroad at that time because it [21] was too dangerous. And so I guess my concern [22] for the Surface Transportation Board is that

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[1] it's supposed to be required to make this a [2] safe railroad. That's one of their comments, [3] they want it to be safe. Let's make it that [4] way.

[5] And I guess that's about all I have [6] for you. I thank you for coming.

[7] **BONNIE:** Okay. Do we some — any [8] other individuals who'd like to speak, take [9] the 3 to 5 minutes? Is there a repeat [10] speaker, any new speakers?

[11] MS. DARNELL: I'd like to just make [12] a quick repeat, please.

[13] **BONNIE:** Sure, go ahead. Again, [14] for the transcript if you could just say your [15] name.

[16] MS. DARNELL: Nancy Darnell from [17] South Newcastle. The license to cross the [18] grasslands should not be granted and the [19] forest plans should not be amended. There's [20] a huge number of reasons why I think that's [21] true and some of them are incompatibility [22] with raptors and other birds that you find on

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[1] pages 4.108-114 in Volume VIII-B. That's [2] confusing numbers. It says — because [3] if you can go back and find that, you're [4] better than me.

[5] Other impacts that cannot be [6] mitigated on the grasslands are noise and the [7] visual impact on the grasslands. In the [8] amendment, it says that this is a [9] nonsignificant impact. We need to make the [10] point to you that building a railroad across [11] both Center (?) Basin and the Mountain View [12] Gap national grasslands is really very [13] significant. The grasslands are a [14] checkerboard of public and private land. [15] Just because the applicant can shift the [16] problems to the private sector doesn't — the [17] problems to the private sector does a lot [18] less than the cumulative impact on

federal [19] lands. Without the adjacent private lands [20] these federal grasslands are only a scattered [21] remnant prairie that loses much of their [22] scientific and ecosystem value.

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[1] While Alternative C is supposed to [2] be much more environmentally friendly, that's [3] what we're told, yet on page -I've got to [4] find this, on page 4.4-28, are listed [5] for each alternative along the Cheyenne. [6] Alternative B would pass within 500 feet of [7] the Cheyenne River and its perennial for [8] a total of 21.9 miles. Alternative C, the [9] preferred alternative, is for 20.8 miles. [10] Only 1.1 mile less? And Alternative D is [11] only 13.5 miles. Now those seem a little odd [12] figures to me. I can't understand why anyone [13] could stand up or write that Alternative C is [14] so much less impact because there's only 1 [15] mile less.

[16] Also, in the DEIS it states that [17] Alternative C is much less of an impact [18] because it will go 500 feet from a rare tube [19] area, which a rogues area, which is an area [20] eligible for wilderness. Well, when it [21] goes 500 feet from that kind of area it will [22] wipe out the wilderness qualities of the

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[1] area. The noise impacts are shown in the [2] DEIS to travel at least five miles, so that [3] pretty well wipes out any possibility of [4] those areas being preserved. [5] Another assertion that's made, [6] page 4.4-27, asserts: "It is like in many of [7] the intermittent stream crossings could be [8] installed and reformation measure implemented [9] without water ever being present in the [10] stream channel." Again, that's pure [11] assertion. Without prohibitions about we're [12] keeping wet places during wet weather, [13] construction schedules can be pursued during [14] any weather and mitigation is long.

[15] Page 4.48, it states: "During [16] rail operation, the offer to obtain rail [17] service may attract businesses to the area [18] along these alternatives for future [19] development. Property values may increase in [20] areas suitable for commercial development." [21] Where is the hard data to show that a new [22] railroad ever brings new business? Where is

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[1] the study of the joint line in the coal [2] corridors that show that business has [3] developed along the lines that were [4] established there in the last 25 years? This [5] is pure pie-in-the-sky speculation and [6] cheerleading for the DM&E.

[7] In the economic studies, they talk [8] only about benefits and not costs. What are [9] the costs? There are many costs

related to [10] this and all the economic studies show -

[11] **SPEAKER:** One minute.

[12] MS. DARNELL: It's the increase in [13] taxes. The DEIS misconstrues the likely [14] economic impacts of the project without the [15] required footnotes and references and, in [16] some cases, gives supposed economic benefits [17] for the project way too much weight for an [18] Environmental Impact Statement. Negative [19] social and economic impacts on the existing [20] population are not considered or understated. [21] Ranchers, townspeople, and farmers should not [22] be asked to provide land through eminent

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[1] domain or to sacrifice their way of life for [2] a private profit project.

[3] BONNIE: Thank you, Any -[4] before Ron comes up, any of the new — or new [5] speakers. If you're a repeat speaker let me [6] get Ron first. Any other folks who haven't [7] spoken before who want the opportunity? [8] Okay, so we've got Ron and Rick, I think, as [9] repeat speakers. Go ahead, Ron.

[10] Ron, can you, again, spell your [11] last name for me?

[12] MR. ALLEMAN: A-1-1-e-m-a-n. [13] how — what it boils down to, from my [14] perspective in working with the railroad, I [15] don't care whether UP hauls it, BN hauls it, [16] or DM&E hauls it. I'm not for [17] Alternative C. I think there is a better [18] route — it's Alternative D. But you got two [19] pieces — two people in there now that are [20] tied to coal. Put another one in, you got [21] three who won't make it. All this is doing [22] DM&E. It ups the value of the DM&E

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[1] rail system, the merger, the takeover by one [2] of the larger railroads that is now in 31 existence. Unless there is really the [4] Union Pacific about, about one of the [5] coming in with them. We sacrificed our [6] lives for this and we work, a lot of ranchers [7] are done for the land out there? No. [8] We make it so that nobody can line their [9] pockets when this is all said and done [10] because they sell their product to someone [11] else at higher cost at our expense? No.

[12] From what I've seen of a lot of the [13] maps you can't tell where it's going. These [14] maps by the Corps of Engineers, they're [15] outdated. They don't even show Highway 450 [16] out here. How do we gauge where this thing's [17] going? Sure, I can look at my piece of land [18] and I can see going to tear me apart, go [19] right through the middle of the cattle [20] pasture. It destroys my cattle pasture. Are [21] they willing to put

an underpass under it? [22] Not really. That's what they've stated to

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[1] me. negotiated way, yeah, they [2] might do that for me. Their fences or the [3] roads that are oil field, are they going [4] to accommodate that oil field? No, not [5] unless they absolutely have to.

[6] The cost to the county and the [7] cities, Weston County, Converse County, [8] Niobrara County, it's going to be more -[9] Campbell County, Weston County, it's going to [10] be more us. People pay their taxes to [11] the counties. We want better crossings out [12] there, we'll have to pay. There's some [13] question about a deal lights on some [14] crossings. Unless they're forced to and we [15] force the federal government to step in [16] through our counties and our cities, they [17] won't those crossings until we [18] probably run over somebody or have a close [19] call. New business on bringing new [20] business in with the rail line from Gillette [21] where it is called the Donkey Creek (?) where [22] to the south. We're pleased it goes

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[1]. How many businesses, other than the [2] coal mines that have been there, have came in [3] since it started in 1979? Two. You've got a [4] rail shop that repairs the rail cars . [5] You've got which is an agent for [6] distributing plastic and materials to the [7] mines up by Belair (?). You've got gas [8] line; that was there before. They finally [9] put in a couple switches so that they can [10] get - how often do they serve? They're [11] served there every day as practical. [12] line and everything else, these people will [13] not put in any additional lines. They don't [14] want them. They don't want to come . [15] They want to move coal..

[16] There is no benefit to the [17] taxpayers and the ranchers and the people of [18] Weston and the other counties, Campbell, [19] . You're going to tear apart our life, [20] you're going to tear apart our system. They [21] wanted everything. Alternative D [22] and make an agreement with Burlington

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[1] Northern. Let them do that. I don't care [2] .Thank you.

[3] SPEAKER: Okay, thank you. Okay, [4] Rick?

[5] MR. WEHRI: Let me make just a few [6] comments. Reading this thing through, I [7] would like to know why the federal and state [8] land is so much more highly valued and . [9] This looks to me like avoiding federal [10] land wherever it could be on private land. [11] Reading through here, Section 4.11-231, 233, [12] whatever, it says: This option is -[13] referring to Option B - most of this option [14] would impact greatly on private property [15]. However, this option would cost [16] state property, eliminating the use of [17] this land for grazing, plus this grazing on [18] stateowned land will be a significant [19] impact. As soon as it gets on state land [20] it's a significant impact. And so private [21] land is not a big deal. They say there's [22] lots of grazing land within the area, it's

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[1] abundant, it's not a big — they'd say the 121 same thing about prime farmlands in South [3] Dakota, there's a law against. [4] Just because we have that doesn't mean [5] we don't look at it, we don't analyze it, we [6] don't see what we're doing to this? That [7] doesn't make sense to me.

[8] They also talked about [9] paleontological things. As soon as you get [10] on federal ground, Forest Service, you have [11] to categorize and do all this stuff old [12] bones and everything, none of them mentioned [13] it on private land. It doesn't matter — it [14] will be publicly by the (?) Landowners [15] Advisory Board. Who is what? Appointed by [16] the DM&E. The Landowners Advisory Board, [17] anyone in this room who wanted to get on it, [18] couldn't get on it. It was a handpicked [19] group by Kevin Shieffer. Every one of them [20] people was paid by Shieffer, but they're [21] all handpicked by him to speak for him.

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[1] they come and negotiate for our land and [2] threaten us to leave, do you think we have [3] anything to say about it? The Landowners [4] Advisory come in and say, you know, we're [5] going to give you \$25, take \$25 and [6] they condemn it, we get nothing, fair market [7] value, which is - well, you know .

[22] The other representatives, when

[8] So I don't see if we go through the [9] mitigation parts of this thing, they talk [10] about — there's a little short paragraph [11] about fire. A little short paragraph about [12] landowner use all being addressed by the [13] Landowner Advisory Committee. Most of those [14] railroads are on private lands and are going [15] to be negotiated by the Landowners Advisory [16] Group and the Surface Transportation Board is [17] supposed to be testing us to make sure that [18] things are mitigated properly. It doesn't [19] say anything about how they're going to do [20] it. It doesn't say, you know, if they don't [21] then what? It just says it will be [22] negotiated by . So I don't see any

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to be [2] addressed.

- [3] **SPEAKER:** Thank you. Donnelly [4] Darnell.
- [5] **MR. DARNELL:** Thank you. My name's [6] Donnelly Darnell. I'd like to speak to the [7] Forest Service amendment.

[8] Certain linear rights-of-way, such [9] as pipelines or electric line corridors, may [10] be very similar to natural conditions. [11] Railroad operations dramatically from [12] these existing uses. A Wyoming facility [13] require linear corridors, however, the impact [14] of linear corridors for rail and highway [15] transport vary greatly in use from the [16] corridors for pipeline and electric [17] lines. While all these are linear corridors, [18] railroad highway corridors are generally high [19] in and the land use varies from - land [20] use — this is a typo, I can't read it [21] straight. It says: And the land use and [22] differs from the surrounding environs. The

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- [1] land use within the pipeline and electrical [2] corridors in contrast may be very similar to [3] what there is adjacent to the right-of-way. [4] Therefore, the impacts made by the different [5] corridors may be significantly [6] different. This is why their proposed [7] amendment is a very significant amendment. [8] My source, Chapter 2, Draft EIS, page 2.46, [9] and I think it speaks as eloquently to this [10] issue as I could. Thank you.
- [11] SPEAKER: Thank you. Okay, anyone [12] else, speakers? We want to remind people [13] one process question. Do you want to [14] respond to that, Wendy?
- [15] **WENDY:** We had a person that had a [16] question on process and the question is: Is [17] there going to be information publicized in [18] the rest of the country to comment on the [19] Forest Service amendment plan and if not, [20] why?
- [21] The Forest Service planned [22] amendment is not it's not like a revision

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- [1] like we're working with on the national [2] grasslands plan now. There are two old [3] forest plans that are now in existence that [4] are about to be superseded by the national [5] grasslands planned revision, and that's the [6] Medicine Burrow (?) National Forest plan and [7] the Nebraska National Forest plan. Both of [8] those plans have major prescriptions for the [9] Thunder Basin and the Buffalo Gap national [10] grasslands.
- [11] When we received this proposal and [12] after the analysis was completed to the draft [13] stage, we both recognized that any [14] alternative is inconsistent with both of [15] those plans. When those

plans were written; [16] they're about 15 years old now and that's why [17] they're being revised, they did not [18] contemplate a linear corridor, like a [19] railroad corridor, at the time they were [20] written. And forest plans are very often [21] revised facing changing circumstances, such [22] as the introduction of a T&E species and the

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- [1] way we have to manage the land for those.
- [2] As far as advertising changes to [3] the forest plans to the rest of the country, [4] we have associated the forest plan amendment [5] with the Draft EIS and the analysis that's [6] been completed, and that has been published [7] in the Federal Register and a notice of the [8] forest plan amendments have been published in [9] the Federal Register, and anybody can comment [10] on those.
- [11] So we have tried to reach out and [12] get as many people involved with the forest [13] plan amendment. And frankly, I have to tell [14] you, the existing forest plans now which you [15] would be commenting on are going to be [16] superseded by the national grasslands plan [17] revision. The reason why we're still dealing [18] with the old forest plans is that we don't [19] have any forest plan decision out. And so it [20] was a question of what decision was going to [21] go first, DM&E or the grasslands plan. And I [22] will tell you that when the grasslands plan

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- [1] comes out, if it's ahead of DM&E, the [2] grasslands plan will be the plan that will be [3] amended.
- [4] That make sense? Probably not.
- [5] (Laughter) [6] I tried, but that's as close an [7] answer I can give you right now without [8] getting too more bureaucratic. Thanks.
- [9] **SPEAKER**: on a calendar when [10] the forest plan might being considered?
- [11] **WENDY**: For which plan, Don? For [12] which plan?
- [13] SPEAKER:
- [14] **WENDY:** Oh, okay. In order to —[15] we would have to have a decision now on that [16] grasslands plan and we're not expecting the [17] grasslands plan to come out till January. [18] And so, you know, the likelihood of that [19] coming out ahead of obviously it's going [20] to come out ahead of DM&E, the decision on [21] DM&E.
- [22] So the likely scenario is that we

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[1] will be amending the national grasslands plan [2] revision with input if

- there's an actual [3] alternative finally selected on DM&E.
- [4] That answer your question, Don? [5] The forest the national grasslands plan [6] is due out in January. That's the final [7] decision and a decision.
- [8] **SPEAKER:** I'm confused, but I [9] because who is going to the grasslands [10] amendment plan? Who —
- [11] **WENDY:** The Forest Service. There [12] will be another process associated with the [13] grasslands plan, which will involve [14] scoping and involvement.
- [15] **SPEAKER:** Not at the direction of [16] DM&E?
- [17] **WENDY:** No, no, no. Yeah. No, and [18] not the Surface Transportation Board. It'll [19] be solely the responsibility of the Forest [20] Service to amend the grasslands plan. And [21] we'll initiate that plan if an action [22] alternative is determined to .

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[1] SPEAKER:

- [2] **BONNIE:** Recommending you take it [3] offline meeting. Okay. We're going to [4] formally adjourn the meeting. I would like [5] very much to thank you all for taking the [6] time to come tonight for honoring each other, [7] listening to one another, respecting the time [8] agreements. We will be tomorrow night [9] at Rapid City and then a week from this week, [10] we'll be completing South Dakota and [11] into Minnesota.
- [12] So again, thank you very much. We [13] know the weather was a little harsh today. [14] We appreciate you taking the time to come out [15] and we urge you to submit your written [16] comments before the deadline of January 5th.
- [17] Thank you. Have a safe drive back [18] and a nice evening.
- [19] (Whereupon, the PUBLIC MEETING [20] was adjourned.)

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